You Can't Buy Someone's Heart

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/59460748.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham & Mrs. Komeda
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Donald Sutcliffe, Dr. Frederick Chilton, Bedelia Du Maurier, Freddie Lounds, Jack Crawford, Mrs. Komeda (Hannibal), Alana Bloom
Additional Tags:	Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Alpha/Omega, Alpha Hannibal Lecter, Omega Will Graham, Top Hannibal Lecter, Bottom Will Graham, Explicit Sexual Content, Explicit Language, Fluff, Smut, Fluff and Smut, Humor, Domestic Fluff, Sassy Will Graham, Slavery, Sexual Slavery, Will Graham Loves Hannibal Lecter, Hannibal Lecter Loves Will Graham, Murder Husbands, Dark Will Graham, Bonding, Biting, Mating, Mating Bites, Knotting, Praise Kink, Daddy Kink, Sugar Daddy, Sugar Daddy Hannibal Lecter, Sugar Baby Will Graham, Implied Mpreg, Scenting, Scent Marking, Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence, Canon-Typical Violence, Minor Character Death, Weddings, Happy Ending, No beta we die like the rude, Omega Verse, Hannibal Lecter is the Chesapeake Ripper, Will Graham is being Dramatic, Hannibal Lecter is a Cannibal, Will Graham is a Cannibal, Porn With Plot
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2024-10-04 Completed: 2024-10-05 Words: 50,195 Chapters: 23/23

You Can't Buy Someone's Heart

by absorbaloff

Summary

“You want to court me, Hannibal?”

“Would you let me?”

“You own me, Hannibal. It’s hardly like I can choose you or deny you.
“I don’t suppose our therapy will be like before,” Will offers after a moment's silence.

“Conversations, not therapy. I have never been your therapist. But I agree, they will certainly be … different,” he pauses.

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For several years, Will has been coming to Dr. Hannibal Lecter for conversations. As an omega, Will is not a person, he’s an alpha’s property. And when Will’s latest alpha decides to sell Will again, Hannibal decides to buy him with the intention of marrying him—to free him.

Notes

This is my first Omegaverse story. I've read so many good A/O stories in this fandom that I was inspired to create this take on it. I hope I do you all justice.
Feedback is welcome!

Get some water, caffeine, a little snackie, and enjoy.

Paperwork

It took his lawyer a few hours that morning to review the paperwork and green-light the sale. When the social worker arrives in the afternoon, with the omega trailing behind, Hannibal only takes a few minutes to sign. Then the social worker leaves, without another glance at Will, leaving the omega and a single suitcase behind, with the omega seated on the chaise in the alpha's office.

"I don't suppose our therapy will be like before," Will offers after a moment's silence.

"Conversations, not therapy. I have never been your therapist. But I agree, they will certainly be … different," he pauses. He gets up from his desk and walks towards Will. "Though I would understand if you wanted me to arrange for you to meet with someone else now…" *that I own you*, he leaves unsaid.

"No," Will answers more firmly than he's ever spoken. "I don't like being psychoanalyzed. You… you've never… I'd rather it be you." Will trails off; the last words are barely above a whisper as Will looks at a point on the collar of Hannibal's jacket. Will's scent is slightly anxious, a somewhat sharp, metallic scent, on top of Will's usual scent, which is usually subtle and sweet, the scent of lightly fried, sweet batter, like beignets. Hannibal finds it slightly more complex than pancakes or waffles.

"Very well, we can continue our conversations. I think that is healthy for both of us." He stands in front of Will and gestures them towards the chairs. "In the future, I will let you decide whether we will continue with them here or have them at home. Though I recommend them here, the location change will aid us, creating a physical separation to keep our personal life separate from the clinical."

Will nods, "Okay." Will agrees with Hannibal's explanation, but Hannibal knows that Will's unique personality and mental processes are going a mile a minute, and pressing him faster than he is ready for would only create hostility.

"Remind me, Will, how long were you with her?" He asks Will, taking Will's previous owner's business card from the stack of papers left by the social worker. *Bedelia Du Maurier*.

"How long did she own me for, or how long did she actually talk to me for?" Will's tone holds a lot of contempt.

He makes a note to hang on to Ms. Du Maurier's card. "I would like to know both if you do not mind sharing." He may need to visit the alpha woman sooner than he anticipated.

Alphas and even betas can buy, and therefore sell, an omega if they have the means. Omegas are rare; as a result, parents typically sold their omega offspring, often for almost six figures. The only advantage omegas have in this secondary-gender slavery is controlling their mating and, as a result, controlling their ability to bond.

Will looks towards Hannibal, never quite meeting his eyes. He's become used to this, knowing Will needs to erect these boundaries for his sanity. But Will examines him like he is something new, something he has never encountered. If someone genuinely interested in Will is new, he definitely needs to visit Ms. Du Maurier.

"She owned me for a year. But she hadn't been in the same room as me for the last ten months."

When he watches Will react to his expressions, he realizes he hasn't hidden his contempt for the woman. The young man is a savant of human emotions and clearly understands the violent images that flit through Hannibal's vision. Combined with the scent of his anger (burnt garlic), Will certainly picks up on the shift in his mood. It doesn't seem to bother Will, which pleases him; he makes a mental note to discuss it in the future. Hannibal's scent returns to normal, something akin to butter melting in a warm pan and toasted almonds.

"So, *she* kept you," he says 'she' laced with venom, "for the minimum time required by a contract."

Will replies with a nod; his gaze drifts up to the shelves of the second floor. Hannibal wants to indulge him. Getting to know Will for the last few years, he realizes there isn't much he won't allow the man.

"If we can keep talking, you are welcome to explore," he offers, gesturing to the mezzanine.

"Thank you, Dr. Lecter," Will whispers before heading towards the ladder.

"You are welcome. And you do not have to call me 'Dr. Lecter.' It's a bit formal."

"What should I call you then?" Will responds from the upper level, raising his volume to compensate for the added distance.

"Hannibal. As it is my name," he replies, smirking. He sees Will looking at him, first with intrigue, then his smile comes, responding to the smirk.

He enjoys seeing Will smile and decides to make it happen more often. Though the distance means he can't smell Will quite as well, he feels the trade for his smile is fair.

"Okay, Hannibal," Will tries the name out on his tongue and seems happy with the results. Judging from his expression, Will hasn't had such courteous relationships with any of his prior owners. Beta's are the most common of the secondary genders, but alphas' physical and mental superiority make them the dominant gender despite being a mere tenth of the population. Omegas are rarer still. At least one parent must be an omega to have one as a child. Those parents can arrange marriages, demanding a hefty bride-price for their child. This brings another question to Hannibal's mind.

"If I may ask," he starts, looking up at Will. "After your parents sold you at 18, I presume, how many alphas have owned you had in the last 17 years?"

Will sighs, and Hannibal braces himself for the unsatisfactory answer he knows will come.

“Sixteen. Though you can’t call it my parents’ decision, my mom left when I was young, and my father barely deserves the title,” Will says, then sits on the mezzanine floor behind the railing, directly above Hannibal's desk, his legs hanging over the edge. For the pair to look at one another, Hannibal needs to stay standing in the middle of the room, so he does.

He prides himself on keeping his face unreadable, and he knows he has barely changed his features to Will’s statement, but based on Will's very expressive face, the young man knows that Hannibal is upset, and he knows it wasn’t at him, either.

“You read people well,” he tells Will.

“Too well,” Will replies.

When Hannibal looks at him without talking, his head slightly tilted, Will understands it as a prompt to continue. This has been the norm during their previous conversations.

“Some shrinks, sorry, therapists, have said I have an empathy disorder. Too much. I suppose if psychopaths have no empathy, there must be people with too much. Don’t you think, Hannibal?”

And that is when the alpha knows that Will knows … something. Hannibal makes a noncommittal hmm in his chest, and Will understands not to push.

“What types of relationships did your owners have with you, Will?” Hannibal moves and sits in his therapy chair opposite the empty patient chair.

“Most wanted to mate, to bond. A few were lonely and wanted to talk to someone—those were the people who got the most upset by my disorder.” Hannibal knows he is leaving something out, but they’ll get there eventually.

“I would argue, Will, that the term disorder seems inaccurate for you,” he says, pausing momentarily. “You said they wanted to mate. I take it you had no desire to?”

Will makes his way back to the ladder, a move that surprises and impresses Hannibal. Most people avoid talking about sex, so Will's moving closer for them to have the discussion is certainly unexpected.

“Yes. It’s ironic for someone with unlimited empathy to be unable to connect with an alpha to mate. Like Ms. Du Maurier...” Will trails off as he maneuvers down the ladder and into his seat; he misses the flash of anger in Hannibal’s eyes.

Omegas are becoming so rare because of this. If they aren’t connected to their owner, to an alpha specifically, they can’t mate, which means they can’t bond and can’t breed. It protects them that way, leaving omegas responsible for picking a mate. But it doesn’t stop alphas from trying.

“So, you have never been with an alpha?” Changing off the topic of that woman.

“No, I have not. You’re hoping to be the first?” Will isn’t avoiding the issue, which speaks well of his mental state and openness.

“I had hoped so. I would prefer that we develop our relationship more naturally before we get to the physical,” Hannibal admits.

“You want to court me, Hannibal?”

Hannibal smiles, a moment of genuine warmth he lets Will see. If being with Will means the young man will see him, all his darkness, he will have to let him see some of the light, too.

“Would you let me?” Hannibal inquires.

“You own me, Hannibal. It’s hardly like I can choose you or deny you.”

Hannibal lets out a small grunt that rings with disgust and disapproval.

“Will, I want to clarify to you now – you have that ability. I have never owned an omega before and do not intend to again. When you told me in our previous conversations that you were being sold, I did not want you to be sold to someone who does not know you,” who doesn’t care about you, his brain continues. “I see great potential in you, and I hope we can build a life together.”

“God, it really does sound like you're courting me now,” Will breathes in through his nose, making a noise like a stifled laugh. He runs a hand through his unruly hair.

“What would be wrong with that?” Hannibal asks, intrigued by Will’s hesitation.

“Then I’m free. Married, sure, but not property—an equal,” Will explains like Hannibal might have forgotten. Bonded omegas, married to an alpha, are considered people. They can be regarded as equals once they aren’t a prized commodity.

“As I said, you have enormous potential, Will. And I find myself increasingly convinced that you would make me an ideal partner. A pair, two sides of the same coin,” he says, knowing that Will can draw the connection to their earlier comments. Will has enough empathy to understand, after all.

“I am flattered, Hannibal,” Will says honestly. “I guess time will tell.”

Dinner

Chapter Summary

Will sees his new home, and Hannibal makes dinner. They both learn more about their new partner. Will does some self-reflection.

Chapter Notes

Some domestic fluff

Since only the super-wealthy can afford an omega, Will has been in several luxury cars. The Maserati that Mr. Smyth had owned seemed too small. The Rolls Royce Ms. Hampton owned was too pretentious. But Hannibal's Bentley is a first. It's luxurious, of course, but somehow makes him feel welcome. Though that might be from Hannibal's welcoming scent, his happiness adds toasted coconut to the base notes of warm butter and toasted almond. Will is luxuriating in the new sensation and trying not to be evident about sniffing his new alpha.

Arriving at the house (*his new home*), Will finds that while it is just as large and pricey as the other homes he has been in, however briefly, Hannibal's seems like an extension of the man himself. It is grand without being too much; it is richly adorned without being gauche. And it smells just like the alpha. Will is already more content than he's been in any other home.

Hannibal welcomes him into the house and excuses himself to start dinner preparations. Will is surprised that the man cooks for himself, but Hannibal has repeatedly proven he is not like the rest. Will is directed to unpack his bag in the primary suite, where room has been made for him, and he can explore as he sees fit to acclimate to his new home until dinner is ready.

Arriving in the primary suite, Will finds that around a third of the large walk-in closet, a space bigger than any room he's ever been given, has been cleared for Will's things. Since Bedelia hadn't let him take the few things she had bought him, Will has little to add to the space. Hannibal had commented on Will's single bag for luggage; his disappointment at the situation (but not in Will) was evident. Talking about Bedlia again has been the closest Will has seen the alpha get to growling. Hannibal, in turn, promises Will that he will soon own a new wardrobe, and Will is still trying to process that information. He can tell Hannibal has been honest with Will so far, though not exactly forthcoming. Hannibal says he intends to spoil and pamper Will, assuring the young omega he is worth it. Will is a bit overwhelmed by the idea, knowing that Hannibal will follow through. He hardly feels worthy of it. Additionally, the fact that Hannibal intends for this to develop naturally, into something intimate and sexual and someday become a marriage, feels too good to be true.

Will, however, knows there is one "but" with all of this. Hannibal isn't a regular person. Sure, he is a wealthy and powerful alpha; he meets that description to a T. But Will's inexpert yet well-attuned senses says that Hannibal is probably a psychopath and that if the flashes of violence he sees are any sign, there might very well be a body count.
Will finds that he doesn't care. However, *that* is what makes Will concerned. Is he being selfish for wanting this opportunity regardless? Does he not care about the fates of people in a society that could revert to owning human beings as property? Honestly, any "innocent" person is still upholding and benefitting from the system that dehumanizes him and keeps him as property. So Will decides that when it comes down to it, he will try things with Hannibal. Innocents be damned. The alpha is clearly cut from a cloth different from any previous owner of his or any person they associated with. That already puts Will at ease. But Will suspects there is much more truth to the idea that the pair might be two sides of the same coin.

Hannibal is plating the mussels in escabeche when he hears Will make his way slowly down the stairs.

"You live by yourself?" Will calls from the front reception room (calling it a formal living room feels like an understatement).

"Not anymore," he calls back. He hears Will chuckle slightly, the laugh of not-quite-believing.

"And you don't keep a staff?" Will has lived in homes with fewer rooms that kept two staff if not more.

"I prefer to do all my cooking and I clean up after myself as I go. But I have a cleaning service that cleans everything else once a week and before and after any dinners I might host." Will can hear him walking closer as he explains.

"Since you cook, do you think you won't need me to?" Will asks, continuing to address the practicalities of living in a new house.

"No, I like to cook," he says. He pauses to look at Will. Will can't meet his eyes head-on, but he aims for Hannibal's right cheekbone, as striking as it is. "And I was serious, Will; I'm not looking for a slave."

"And yet . . ." Will says, though not aiming to wound, the truth still hurts.

"And yet I hope with time, I will earn your trust and your belief that I want to be partners, equals. Someday. When you choose. In the meantime, I will put you in that role."

"And so, it's up to me to catch up?" Will cannot help but smile a little, an answering smirk.

"Whenever you are ready," Hannibal smiles back. "But come, dinner is ready." Hannibal takes Will by the hand and leads him to the dining room, holding hands the whole way.

Rather than sit at the head of the table, Hannibal sits them side by side, facing the fireplace, with their backs to what appeared to be an herb wall(?). He holds out and pushes in Will's

chair for him to sit before getting their plates from the kitchen in the next room. Will's eyes sweep the room, one that speaks more intimately of the man than the rest of the common spaces. He can tell that Hannibal typically sits at the head of the table, as the table has subtly more wear at that spot. But rather than amplify their power imbalance, he sets them on equal footing; Will appreciates his effort, however minor.

Hannibal returns with their plates balanced expertly on his left arm. He brings out a chilled bottle of white wine and a pair of crystal wine glasses. Their silverware, or more accurately, goldware, is already on the table.

"You should have said something; I would have helped," Will says, watching Hannibal work swiftly to serve them.

Hannibal gives him a disapproving look and proceeds to sit, pouring them each a glass of wine.

"If you want us to be equal, you can't carry every burden strictly by yourself," Will continues.
Hannibal pauses at his words and places the bottle at the center of the table.

"That is more than fair. I appreciate that," Hannibal replies, staring at Will with a sweet, calm demeanor.

"What," Will asks, suddenly self-conscious.

"I find myself wanting to kiss you but compelled to restrain myself."

"You usually get what you want." Will's quiet response isn't a question.

Hannibal nods his concurrence.

"I can see why," Will replies in a whisper as he leans across to place a kiss on Hannibal's cheek.

As Will leans back, Hannibal brushes a loose curl behind the omega's ear. His hand pauses, cupping Will's head for a fraction of a moment before returning to his place setting. The room smells of their food and their scents: warm butter, toasted almonds, and coconut from Hannibal, plus the scent of the content, happy omega: the warmth of beignets dusted in sweet powdered sugar.

"Mussels in escabeche with garlic-tossed tostones," Hannibal explains, gesturing for Will to dig in. Their plates hold five mussels in olive oil and vinegar marinade, along with a healthy portion of fried plantain chips, finished with a sprinkle of flaky, kosher salt.
After Will happily devours half his serving, he slows down enough to talk.

"Absolutely delicious, Hannibal. Thank you," says Will, who genuinely enjoys the meal and isn't putting him on. His face is an open book anyway; Hannibal would know if he was less than honest.

“You are most welcome,” Hannibal says, standing to clear their plates. But Will stands, collecting his own plate.

Will smiles when Hannibal fights to hold back his retort and instead leads the way into the kitchen.

Will takes the room in as he brings his dish to the sink, where Hannibal quickly rinses it and adds it to the cabinet-front dishwasher, hidden in the kitchen island across from the sink.

“This is where you live,” Will declares.

“Yes, I thought we established that when I brought you here.”

Will is ready to fight back when he sees Hannibal smiling, no, chuckling to himself.

“I didn’t mean…that. I meant the kitchen is you, your heart.” Hannibal’s laughter stops, and he looks at Will. His expression is a mix of amazement, appreciation, and adoration. “You can’t keep looking at me like that,” Will tells Hannibal as they take their entrée to their seats in the dining room.

“Why not,” Hannibal asks, concerned.

“It’s…it’s too much. I don’t,” Will says, trailing off while looking at his hands wringing the linen napkin.

Hannibal reaches over, placing his large hand on Will’s, stopping the wringing. He holds on, holding Will’s hand, and looks at the curly-haired man. He waits until Will dares to look him in the eyes.

“I was not lying when I said I saw potential in you. But I have underestimated how far I have fallen in my desire for companionship and intimacy with you. And the more you understand and accept me, the further I fall.” As he confesses, he strokes the back of Will’s hand with his thumb. “You deserve everything I have to give, and probably more, though I am hesitant to downplay my abilities and advantages,” he chuckles at the idea he might not be perfect and that his money can’t do the rest. “Please let me spoil you,” Hannibal asks. “If you cannot yet accept that you are worthy of it, do it because I can afford it, and doing so would bother my peers,” Hannibal says with a conspiratorial smile.

Will is still looking into Hannibal’s eyes, seeing the truth of his feelings, much more than his words express. Will puts his other hand on top of Hannibal’s and leans over to kiss him on the lips. Though it is close-mouthed, it is slow, soft enough to want more, and brings a warmth to both men they haven’t felt in years.

Will finally breaks the kiss, not pulling back far, so they can still feel the warmth of their shared breaths.

“Thank you,” he says, lifting Hannibal’s hand to his lips to kiss each knuckle before letting go. While Will intently watches Hannibal, he is unsure whether he imagines him purring at the romantic gesture.

Will pours them another glass of wine, finishing the bottle, while Hannibal explains the second course, scallops in a romesco sauce. They eat the meal in companionable conversation, going through introductory questions like a first date (since it was).
They clear the table together. While Will rinses the dishes, Hannibal removes two ramekins from the refrigerator to plate the caramel flans. When Hannibal retrieves spoons from the drawer, Will encourages Hannibal to stay in the kitchen, where they happily have their dessert together, relaxing further into their domestic situation.

“This was wonderful. I already feel spoiled,” Will says after dessert, sipping the tea Hannibal has made them.

“And imagine, this is just the beginning,” Hannibal grins, promising so much to the younger omega. He is delighted when Will shudders with the anticipation, though Will wouldn’t admit to himself what he feels. “I know it has been a long and dramatic day. Should we retire to bed, or would you like to relax in the study first?”

“While I would love for you to give me a tour, I’m afraid I have to choose bed. I hope that’s okay,” Will says, worried he will offend Hannibal after he has been so good to him tonight.

“Of course, it is okay. That is why I asked. I would have told you as much if I had wanted one or the other. I intend never to lie to or mislead you. It may take time for me to be comfortable enough to reveal everything, but I will not lie. Not to you, Will.” Hannibal swears to Will before kissing Will’s hand and collecting their teacups and saucers. Will grabs a cloth from under the sink, adding water and soap, and wipes down the island and counters. Hannibal watches him, enjoying the view. Hannibal has never had a guest, let alone a partner, who was willing to share in the domesticity of everyday life; Hannibal feels honored, smiling at the omega.

Hannibal leads them out of the room to head for the upper floor.

“I told you, you have to stop looking at me like that,” Will whispers as Hannibal places his hand on the small of Will’s back.

Hannibal leans over, gently scenting Will before kissing his temple softly.

“Did you just sniff me,” Will asks, knowing and not expecting the answer.

Evening Ablations

Chapter Summary

“Can I ask you a question now?”

“Of course,” Will replies.

“What do you see? When you see me?”

Will stops moving but does not run away either. “You don’t want that."

~*~

Getting ready for bed.

Chapter Notes

Is everyone doing okay? I hope so.

Hannibal has brushed his teeth and is applying lotion to his face. He can hear Will in the closet, getting out of his clothes. When the young man appears in the doorway of the en suite bathroom, his clothes are in a semi-folded pile, and he is left standing in an old undershirt and the boxers he had worn that day.

“Hamper?” Will asks, looking to deposit the dirty clothes from the day.

“Laundry shoot, back right corner of the closet,” Hannibal says, replacing the lid for his face lotion.

Hannibal follows Will out to the closet. While Will drops his bundle into the shoot, Hannibal procures and offers Will a pair of gingham cotton pajamas.

“Strip out of those and sleep in these. You shouldn’t wear the undergarments you wore all day to bed.” Will accepts them without comment, and before he knows it, Hannibal has left him to change in privacy.

When Will goes to the bathroom, he finds Hannibal sitting on the edge of a large sunken tub.

“The left sink is yours. There are toiletries and whatever else you might need in the cabinet below.”

Sitting on his heels, Will squats to inspect the cabinet's contents. He recognizes most of the shaving items that have their separate basket. Another basket for what appears to be for feet, if the foot scrub and file are to be believed. And another for deodorant and cologne. All the items are new and in baskets with a wooden, etched “W” on the sides.

“Thank you,” Will says softly, glancing briefly to meet Hannibal’s eyes. Enough time to show Hannibal his appreciation, however insufficient he finds his own words to be.

“Mmm,” Hannibal lets out a soft, content hum, the alpha happy to provide for his omega. “You are welcome, but you do not have to thank me for basic necessities.”

Will stifles a chuckle while brushing his teeth, avoiding choking on the toothpaste. He spits and rinses, putting the toothbrush into the cup on the counter with Hannibal’s. Will turns to see Hannibal smiling back at him.

“There are necessities, and there is the luxury version. I have been given an orange bar of the most pungent soap more times than I can count. It makes my skin itch thinking about it. This,” Will knocks on the marble counter above his cabinet, “qualifies as more than necessary, so thank you.”

Will walks towards Hannibal to stand in front of the alpha, who looks at Will and slowly moves his hands towards the younger’s hips, waiting to be told no. Will stays quiet, silently encouraging the touch. Hannibal’s hands rest gently on Will’s hips; his thumbs rub Will’s hip bones, and his palms and fingers are splayed across the small of his back and top of his butt. Will smiles at the delicate gesture. Hannibal smiles at Will’s reaction.

“Can I ask you a question, Hannibal?” The holder man nods, allowing him to continue.

“Why did you always insist we were having conversations?”

“Ah,” Hannibal says and pulls gently on Will, who steps between Hannibal’s knees and feels the warmth from the younger man, magnifying that warm beignet smell. “They didn’t explain that to you?”
Will shakes his head — no, they had not explained.

“Omegas cannot have therapy. They cannot be viewed as complex or worthy of help; otherwise, society must acknowledge their crimes. Needless to say, I am afraid I have to disagree with them. I have offered my services pro bono for many years, working with social workers and reaching out to alpha owners. But for me to be allowed to continue, I had to ensure it was never construed as therapy.” Hannibal says, rubbing small circles on Will’s pajamas with his thumbs. Hannibal looks up, where Will’s eyes are closed; whether taking in his words or enjoying his ministrations, Hannibal isn’t quite sure.

“Should I . . . stop?” Hannibal says, lifting his hands gently and applying no pressure, but his hands still framed Will’s hips.

“Mmmm,” Will hums softly, shaking his head. “No, you don’t have to.”

Hannibal finds this a less than satisfactory answer.

“But what do you want?” He waits for Will to answer more appropriately.

“You…I don’t want you to stop. I’m just not ready for more,” Will replies honestly.

Hannibal replaces his hands, thumbs stroking, his palms and fingers caressing. He gently pulls Will forward so his toes are against the tile surrounding the tub. Will moves his hands to Hannibal’s shoulders, gently rubbing the soft silk pajamas against the hard lines of Hannibal’s muscular shoulders.

Hannibal leans his head against Will’s stomach, the soft cotton plaid a barrier still, though Will can feel the warmth from Hannibal’s skin and breath through the fabric. Hannibal’s eyes are half-open, looking at Will’s feet. Will’s fingers move over the fabric around Hannibal's shoulders, not accidentally brushing against the skin on his neck. Neither comment on it, fearing they would scare away this skin-to-skin contact. For alphas and omegas, their necks are highly sensitive, home to their scent glands, where bonding bites are traded if the omega accepts the alpha. Will touching him there is a good sign.

“Can I ask you a question now?” Hannibal asks, eyes still pointed down. Will wants to touch Hannibal’s hair to see if it feels as soft as it looks. He keeps his left hand on his shoulder, continuing to stroke and make light touches. He moves his right hand into Hannibal’s hair; he combs his fingers through the dark blonde locks. He rubs and strokes Hannibal’s head how he wishes someone had touched him: gently and longingly. His hair is as soft as it looked.

“Of course,” Will replies with a tone that offers himself as an equal to Hannibal, someone who would let Hannibal do anything because they want to rather than as a legal requirement.

“What do you see? When you see me?”

Will stops moving but does not run away either. He is concerned about what an honest answer will mean for them going forward.

“You don’t want that, Han… You do not want that. Everyone who has ever asked me has ended up pushing me away because of it.” Will shudders.

“You are the only one since I lost my sister who has ever seen part of the real me. I need you to see me so we can continue. I cannot fool myself into thinking we would live happily ever after if you never really knew me.” The alpha’s tone is calm, but his scent presents a touch of anxiety with a slightly acidic tang, upsetting Hannibal's typically mellow olfactory landscape.

Will resumes moving his hands on Hannibal, wanting the contact for himself as much as he wants to reassure the alpha; what Will shares will be very emotional for both of them, but he tells him anyway.

“People would classify you as a psychopath. It’s not entirely true because—clearly—you can develop strong emotional attachments to individuals. But you don’t care about people in general. They are beneath you. You have an obsessive-compulsive personality. Your cleanliness and clothes are your armor against the world; it is how you keep others at bay while showing them that you are better than them. Your food is another area that you control.

Though it's not a compulsion, it is… It's art." Will paused. There is more, and Hannibal knows it too.

"And," Hannibal chokes out, his voice raw and emotional.

"And you have the capacity for violence. Extreme violence. You can hurt people with no regard for them. You probably already have."

"Are you scared? Of me?" Hannibal is gripping Will's hips in his iron grasp. The omega doesn't struggle.

"No. I'm not scared of you."

"Wha... What are you scared of?" Hannibal wills his hands to loosen his grip on Will; though his hands remain on his hips, his eyes stay on Will's feet.

"I am scared that it doesn't bother me, the idea of you hurting people. That it doesn't scare me away." Will shudders; his voice is quiet, making him seem smaller as if to hide from the truth of his words, afraid of it, afraid of punishment for being different.

Hannibal stands and pulls Will into his arms. The two hold onto each other, pulling their bodies flush. Will puts his head on Hannibal's shoulder, scenting the alpha, offering him a sense of calm and relief. The alpha's scent has lost the acidic tang and is once again warm and nutty. The omega's warm breath ghosts along Hannibal's neck. They each cling to one another, their scents providing comfort, their picture of one another becoming more apparent, and their connection more obvious.

Finally, Will stands up straight, straightening Hannibal's pajamas on his shoulders. Hannibal drops one arm but tucks a curl behind Will's ear with his hand, cupping Will's head. They share a look, gazing into each other's eyes, and smile.

"I think we've had enough revelations for day one," Will chuckles.

"I think you might be right," Hannibal says, lifting each of Will's hands to his mouth to kiss his knuckles. Will blushes.

Turning to the bedroom, it is apparent which side is Hannibal's by looking at the nightstands, in so much that it has something on it, a leather-bound book and a notepad and pen. Hannibal has put a glass of water on Will's side. The gesture touches the omega, though he is learning not to be surprised by these little acts of service.

Hannibal slides under the covers while Will hesitates.

"I…uh…I'm not sure this is a good idea," Will says.

"Why ever not?"

"I sweat. And get night terrors. Sometimes."

“Everyone sweats. And I know an exceptional doctor to work with you for your night terrors,” Hannibal counters, not accepting that Will might sleep elsewhere.

It takes Will two seconds to realize that Hannibal means himself before laughing softly. Will climbs in and lies on his back, looking at the high vaulted ceiling.

“Um,” Will starts, embarrassed to say outright whatever he was trying to say.

Hannibal turns on his side to face him. “Yes, Will?”

“If it’s not too forward, can we spoon? I can be big or little; I don’t . . .” Before Will can finish, Hannibal grabs him and bodily relocates him to the middle of the bed, where Hannibal slides up behind him. Hannibal is the big spoon.

Hannibal drapes his arm around Will, setting his hand against his chest. “Is this okay?” Hannibal asks, rubbing his hand against Will’s chest above his heart.

“Mmmm,” Will purrs his approval, the vibrations going through his body into Hannibal’s. Both men are identically different; their lack of touch is real; one is forced on him, and the other is self-imposed.

Hannibal tells his voice assistant to turn off the lights so neither has to move before drifting off to sleep. Their bedroom is filled with the scent of sugary beignets and buttery, toasted coconut.

Friday Morning

Chapter Summary

> “You’re just thrilled you make me so inarticulate,” Will says, smiling. And based on Hannibal’s answering smirk, he’s correct.
>
> “So, what is today’s new and revised agenda?” Will asks, spearing his last bite of potato and eating it.
>
> “I was able to procure you an appointment at 10:00 with an old colleague of mine.”

Chapter Notes

> Our boys wake up together and are a tease to one another.
>
> Will does have encephalitis, but Dr. Lecter is going to fix it. To the hospital! *she points to the sky like a superhero*
>
> TW: Mentions of past abuse.

Hannibal wakes up first, noticing that Will and he had stayed put during the night, with no sweats or nightmares to speak of. He is also painfully aware of his erection pressed against the cleft of Will’s ass. After an emotionally exhausting day, he wants Will to sleep and is afraid to move since Will has gripped onto his arm, still in place above his chest, holding the pair together.

Hannibal becomes acutely aware that Will is starting to wake up as he groans and presses himself back into Hannibal’s throbbing morning wood. And then he freezes.

“Good morning, Will,” Hannibal says, his voice directly in Will’s ear, husky from sleep. Will’s cock twitches. The scent of their mutual arousal reached their noses.

“Sorry about . . .” Will is going to apologize but then has a better idea. “Well, I’m in no better shape,” Will says as he guides Hannibal’s hand from his chest to his erection, tenting his pajama pants while his body starts to produce slick for the first in a very long time.

Hannibal groans lewdly against Will’s neck, his nose filled with the scent of the omega in his arms, and his hips buck involuntarily into Will’s luscious ass.

“Fuck,” Will moans. Wanting more contact but having nothing to grip as the little spoon. Hannibal’s hand is pressing Will’s erection against his body and hasn’t done anything but apply pressure.

“You know I want to go at your pace, and I don’t want to pressure you into anything,” Hannibal says, his voice breathy against Will’s ear. “But I’d be happy to help you out with this,” Hannibal puts more pressure against Will’s dick, causing him to buck into Hannibal’s hand.

Will is trembling. “Fuck. I want you to, but I don’t know where my head is right now.”

Hannibal kisses his neck as chastely as someone can who is pressing against your erection with his hand, and his own is pressed against your ass.

“You are hot,” Hannibal comments.

“Uh, thanks?” Will replies as a question since Hannibal’s tone shifted the conversation, as he hadn’t implied it as a compliment.

“You seem to have a fever,” he clarifies.

“I run warm at night,” Will offers.

Hannibal sniffs him. First, his neck, then embarrassingly, lifts Will’s arm to sniff his armpit.

“Well, that’s mortifying,” Will observes. “Does this mansion have a hole I can crawl into?”

“Our home does not have a hole to crawl into. It does have a shower. You climb in, and I am making you an appointment to see a former colleague, a neurologist.”

“Uh, what?” The confusion is written on Will’s face as much as in his tone.

“You are sick. Were you sick before yesterday?” Hannibal asks from the en suite, getting Will’s shower started, to get the temperature ready for his partner.

“I was.” Will sits up and swings his legs over the side of the bed. When Hannibal’s stare and lack of response prompt him, Will elaborates. “Frequent headaches, fevers, chills, night terrors.”

“Why weren’t you affected yesterday?” Hannibal is concerned, moving towards Will.

“Think you bought a lemon?” Will asks, almost petulant over the questions.
Hannibal kneels between Will’s legs; Will would have been turned on again if he wasn’t angry.

“I want to make sure you are okay. And if you have encephalitis, as I think you do, you have likely been sick for many months, and…*she* did nothing to help you.” Hannibal won’t even say her name; the anger is evident on his face, and the scent of burnt garlic starts coming off him.

Will whimpers. His brain knows the alpha isn't upset with *him*, but the omega hindbrain scented the anger and grew nervous regardless. Even if Hannibal hadn't been so close, the anger and resulting stiffness would have shifted him instinctually into a warning.

As Hannibal hears the sound of Will's whimper, he scents the acidity of the omega's anxiety.

"Shhhh," Hannibal hushes, sitting next to him on the bed and pulling Will into his arms. He calms himself and presses his calming scent out into the air to placate and gentle the omega he cradles. Once they are settled and calmed, Will explains to Hannibal.

"She had a doctor come; they gave me a shot of some steroid and a large dose of Tylenol." Hannibal stands, pulling Will to his feet, and strokes Will's face, from his temple, along the jawline, to the chin, with the knuckle of his index finger. Will lets out a soft, satisfactory purr at the touch.

"I want you to shower. I will get you an appointment. Today, if I can. I will get something for you to wear. Then I will shower and get breakfast ready." Hannibal pauses. "Can…can I kiss you?"

Will nods his head. "Mmm, yes."

Still holding Will's chin with his knuckle, he maneuvers them into a kiss. Closed-mouthed, firm, and full of promise.

"Hannibal?" Will says when he is released from the kiss and Hannibal's hand.

"Yes, Will?"

"You don't have to ask me if you want to kiss me." And Will smiles.

Hannibal is speechless. As a psychiatrist, he has studied and treated people with a complex range of human emotions, but he's never thought he would experience the intensity of falling in love firsthand.
Will finds the large shower has two washcloths, one shampoo, and two conditioners. One conditioner bottle is new and is for curly hair. Hannibal bought it for him. There is also a liquid face wash and a bar of soap. Everything is from the same product line, as they all share the same scent: brown sugar and vanilla. It is subtle, but pressed against Hannibal all night, Will finds that Hannibal's natural scent combined with his bath products made him and their bed smell like freshly baked cookies. A deliciously scented psychopath. Will shakes his head in disbelief as he rinses.

When Will gets out of the shower, he contemplates shaving but figures he should talk to Hannibal to see if the man has preferences. He puts on deodorant and a drop of cologne. Will can hear Hannibal showering elsewhere on the floor. In the bedroom, he sees the clothes Hannibal has laid out for him. There is a pair of black slacks he has brought with him and one of Hannibal's shirts; it's dark blue, not quite navy, with French cuffs. The underwear is his, as is the undershirt. The socks are Hannibal's. Will only has one pair of shoes, short black boots that look good enough with the slacks. But Will remembers that Hannibal intends to buy him

a new wardrobe, so there is no point in overthinking anything for the long term. He gets dressed and makes his way down the stairs.

Will is impressed that Hannibal showered and dressed so quickly that he had already started breakfast. His suit jacket is on a hook with the other aprons, and his sleeves are rolled up to his elbow.

“One egg or two?” Hannibal asks, splitting the contents of the frying pan onto the two waiting plates – diced potatoes, bell peppers, and onions.

“One egg is *un oeuf* for me,” Will smiles, making eye contact more readily than yesterday. Hannibal laughs at the joke, preparing two eggs: one for each of them.

“You don’t eat a big breakfast normally, I take it,” Hannibal comments.

Will stays quiet, as the topic of his previous poor living conditions has already caused Hannibal to get angry this morning.

Hannibal turns to look at Will; he takes the quiet for precisely what it is. “You weren’t given breakfast.” Hannibal’s heart aches.

“I would be brought out for any brunches to show off. I was to be seen rather than heard. But I wasn’t welcome at the table normally. Those owners typically pulled me out for my condition—as a party trick or to observe business deals—but I wasn’t kept around otherwise.”

Will stands beside Hannibal and eases his hand onto the pan, shifting Hannibal’s off. Hannibal reigns in his feelings while Will plates their eggs, trying not to let his anger disturb the omega again. He rinses the pan and sets it in the dishwasher while Hannibal garnishes the eggs with fresh minced chives and a dollop of caviar. Will would have rolled his eyes if it hadn’t been beaten out of him years ago.

“I want to apologize for cursing…earlier,” Will says between forkfuls as they start to eat.

Hannibal smiles and reaches for Will’s nearest fork-less hand to hold. “If that is how you respond to my touch, I do not mind hearing you say it.” Hannibal punctuates by kissing the pulse point on Will’s wrist, inhaling the sweet scent of the omega, before lowering their hands to the countertop.

“You’re just thrilled you make me so inarticulate,” Will says, smiling. And based on Hannibal’s answering smirk, he’s correct.

“So, what is today’s new and revised agenda?” Will asks, spearing his last bite of potato and eating it.

“I was able to procure you an appointment at 10:00 with an old colleague of mine.”

“When should I be ready for the car?” Will asks, clearing his and Hannibal’s plates from the kitchen island.
Hannibal looks at Will first in confusion and then in frustration. Will tracks all of this, wondering what is happening in Hannibal’s mind to create these emotions.

“I will be taking you, Will,” Hannibal says, his exterior calm, but Will sees in his eyes that he is anything but. Will thinks, *when did I stop avoiding eye contact with Hannibal*? Though Will is not worried about the prospect.

“And you’re upset about it?” Will ventures to try to interpret Hannibal’s emotions in real time. “No . . . no, you’re upset at me? …Not *at* me. But towards me? Help me out here.”

“Will,” Hannibal says, turning on his seat to face Will head-on. “You are my partner. I will not pawn you off on some car service when you are ill.” Hannibal pauses, seeing that the comment is making Will emotional. Hannibal isn’t quite sure why showing care for the omega would make him look so worried.

“You have patients, don’t you? I don’t want to ruin your livelihood on day two.” Will is trying to avoid, and failing, at making eye contact with Hannibal. He used to be better at this.

Hannibal takes both of Will’s hands in his own before beginning. “I have two regular appointments on Fridays, both in the morning, and both were rescheduled this week due to your arrival. And I would cancel any in the future if I needed to take care of you.” Will looks like he wants to object, but Hannibal continues. “And as for our livelihood, my psychiatric practice is not the arbiter of our fortunes. I could quit my practice for good today, and we would never notice a difference. The benefits of being old money,” he assures Will.

“Old money?” Will inquires, thanks to Hannibal’s reassurances his mood has improved.

“When you agree, you will be married to a count,” Hannibal says casually, releasing one of Will’s hands to finish his cup of coffee, which, based on his reaction, has gone cold.
Will lets go of their other clasped hands to get the pot of coffee to warm their cups—Hannibal strokes Will’s arm in appreciation for the gesture.

“So, you practice psychiatry to occupy your time.” He returns the carafe to the coffee machine but keeps talking on his return to his seat. “Not occupy,” he continues his analysis of the alpha. “You have enough interests outside of that. No, you do it because most of the time, people entertain you. You find most minds malleable. You worked with omegas to subvert the system. But you work with alphas and betas to toy with them. Like mice for a cat.”

Hannibal’s expression is a mix of amusement and adoration. It makes Will happy to see it.

“I have some things for you,” Hannibal says, standing and going to the adjoining pantry, where he procures a small brown shopping bag with black ribbon handles.

“Things? As in gifts, plural?” Will needs clarification. He is still wading into these waters and feels the impending doom of anxiety and overwhelm.

Hannibal stands behind Will and places the bag on the counter before him. He leans against Will just the smallest amount, surrounding the omega to help him feel safe. Will knows he is doing it to help ground him and help him cope, but knowing it was happening didn't stop it from being effective. He leans back into Hannibal.

"They are not gifts. They are practicalities. When I give you your first gift, I want it to be . . . significant," Hannibal then kisses Will on the crown of his head before encouraging Will to proceed.

The first item Will grabs is the largest, a cell phone. He immediately places it on the counter next to the bag, almost like it would burn him.

"I can't have that," Will's voice is tense. "You know I can't have that," he is getting worked up. Hannibal wraps his arms around Will, under his arms, and across his chest. His head is on Will's shoulder while Will continues. "Unbonded omegas can't have phones. It would allow us too much independence. And even worse, it could allow us to collude." Will says these words with disdain, clearly repeating the standard government lines on the matter, their official propaganda.

"Hmm," Hannibal hums, a pantomime that he was thinking this over when he has already thought about this. "If I have two phones, I can make you carry the extra and answer it when it rings." Will leans his head back onto Hannibal's shoulder, letting out a small huff of frustration and acceptance. That it exposes his neck did not go unnoticed by the alpha, knowing this unconscious action demonstrates some deep levels of trust brought on by a sense of safety with the alpha.

Hannibal takes the opportunity to kiss Will's exposed neck, closed-mouth. However, the small moan that escapes Will's mouth makes Hannibal linger. He licks at Will's neck and mouths the muscles along his jaw. Will winds his arm behind him to bury in Hannibal's hair.

"Mmm, Han," Will moans.

Hannibal stops kissing him, whispering into Will's ear, "I love when you call me that." Will pulls away enough to turn and look at Hannibal, who he needs to see to interpret. "You are the only person who has been comfortable enough with me to shorten my name. And the only one who I would allow to, frankly." Will smiles, happy to hear the declaration. Moments like this give Will clarity into Hannibal, into "them," so he better understands.

"Should we move to the next 'practicality?' I don't want us to be late," Will asks.

Hannibal moves his chin to Will's other shoulder and whispers *yes* before placing a kiss behind his ear. Will shudders and leans further into Hannibal.

This time, Will retrieves a watch from the bag. It is not in the box; to reinforce the idea, it was a practicality, not a gift. Will figures it was one of Hannibal's he is tired of.

"May I?" Hannibal reaches out to take it from him, and Will nods his consent.

Hannibal explains that it is a Patek Philippe Nautilus in stainless steel, which means nothing to Will, but it is an excellent-looking watch that is self-winding and has a dark blue face. It has a metal band, which Hannibal carefully manipulates to show Will the bottom of the watch, where Will learns it's not being regifted, it was bought for him. The watch is engraved in an elegant script with two initials: *WL*. Will takes in the slightest gasp, but Hannibal hears it regardless.

When a parent gives up a child, or more accurately, sells them into the contracted life of being an owned omega, the person loses their family name. Any documents, government, medical, or whatever you have, all use "Owned" as a last name. Getting married might be the only way to have a family name again, but it also means personhood. If they make good on Hannibal's plans and promises, they will make 'Will Owned' into 'Will Lecter.'

"I…I'm…not sure…I," Will doesn't know what to say, so he settles on "Thank you."

"You do not have to thank me for practicalities either," referencing Will's thank you for 'necessities' the night before.

"Han," Will pauses to make sure he has the alpha's attention. "You express appreciation and adoration through caring for me and with your practicalities, necessities, or whatever name you give them. You come from a world of immense privilege; the cost means nothing. But the cost has nothing to do with why you do this for me." They are both looking forward; Hannibal stands as a big spoon to Will's seated little spoon. He takes a steadying breath and continues. "For me, I have nothing. I can't even have money to reciprocate, and I know you wouldn't want me to if I did; you don't want objects. What I can give you, what I am giving you, is genuine appreciation for what you've given me, what you're doing for me. So please let me thank you. Because it's the only thing I have to give, the only autonomy I have."

Hannibal kisses the crown of Will's head again and leaves his face buried among the curls. It is a feeling he could get used to but never wants to get old. He watches from among the curls as Will puts the new watch on. He nods into Will's hair, accepting.

"Okay, next," Hannibal prompts. Will chuckles at the impatience from the usually stoic man.

The next is a key chain—dark brown leather—with an electronic fob inside. On the keychain is a single key.

"The fob will arm and disarm the alarm; the key is for the front, back, and garage doors." Will is stunned. Will has regularly been locked into the houses of his owners. A key is new territory. Will reaches behind him, clawing to get Hannibal closer, and Hannibal happily obliges, pressing closer, his arms pulling tighter.

"I would have preferred to have a car fob on there as well, but once we're married, we'll get your license, and I can buy you a car as a wedding gift."

"You're insane," Will says amongst the soft laughter bubbling out of him.

"Yes, probably, but not about this," he kisses Will's cheek. "One more, and then we need to go."

Three gifts have completely overturned his world and reality. What could the fourth possibly do?

It is a caramel brown leather wallet with a Prada logo in the corner. He opens the wallet and finds a single black card inside it. There is no logo on the card. The back has the typical credit card info—number, date, and code. But the name on the card is William Lecter, not Hannibal.

“How? I can’t…literally, the point of having omegas in slavery hinges on me being property, being unpaid.”

Hannibal gives Will a gentle squeeze before he becomes angry or hysterical, sending out pheromones to calm the omega. After a moment, Will’s breathing settles back to normal.

“The card is for a foreign account. Since over 200 countries around the world still oppose slavery, my bank is happy to facilitate this arrangement. You are a co-owner of the account; you do not need my permission to access any of it.”

Will’s laugh is on the cusp of disbelief and hysteria.

“So, what’s my spending limit,” Will asks, joking.

“There is none.” Will looks at him, confused. “You could buy another house, there’s no limit.”

Will is still trying to process the card and all his other gifts as Hannibal ushers them into the garage and then the Bentley.

New Agenda

Chapter Summary

> “Shower?” he asks when Will returns from the en suite.
>
> “I think so, between being in the hospital, the MRI machine, and then getting groped by Signore Gallo, I need to feel clean.”
>
> “Will,” Hannibal stops him before he gets too far. “I know you are joking, but if anyone ever touches you inappropriately or without your permission…”
>
> ~*~
>
> Alpha Hannibal does some top-notch caretaking.

Chapter Notes

> TW: Mentions of past abuse.
> Medical exams/procedures mentioned.
>
> Also, people are being dicks to Will.

The drive to the Johns Hopkins campus is short. Hannibal spends every spare glance and every stoplight looking at Will, who is admiring his watch, brushing his fingers against the engraving, and giving off the scent of sugar-covered beignets.

About two blocks from the Caroline Street building, Will asks, “Should I be worried? I don’t know anything about encephalitis. I just assumed I’d be okay because you weren’t worrying.”

Hannibal knows that his pheromones and presence are instinctually calming to an omega, and Will’s empathy makes him susceptible to influence, but seeing it is different from knowing.

“No, you should not be worried now. Once you are treated, you will not have anything to worry about.”

Hannibal pulls up to the front doors, handing his key fob to the valet. Hannibal leads them through the building, his hand on the small of Will’s back. Hannibal knows his way around the hospital, not looking at maps or signs as they navigated to the elevators.

“You were on staff here,” Will says.

Hannibal nods. “General surgeon in the emergency department.” Hannibal directs them from the elevator on the fifth floor to the neurology and neurosurgery wing of the building. Hannibal stays with Will as he checks in, keeping his arm around Will rather than shying away. He insists that

Will answer any questions he can; Hannibal only speaks on matters to which Will doesn’t have answers, such as insurance and payment.

Once checked in, they turn to the waiting areas, which have two parts—one for people and one for omegas. Hannibal sits in the people waiting area and makes it very clear to Will that he is to join him, so he does.

A few minutes later, a young beta woman, an office medical assistant, comes out to collect Will. When Will stands from his spot (not in the omega section), she and the others who heard him called in as “Will Owned” give him a disapproving look.

The MA measures Will’s height and weight and has him sit beside her computer terminal while updating his chart. Then, she asks Hannibal about Will’s symptoms.

“Will,” Hannibal says, leaning in to read her name from her employee ID badge, “Erika Johnson would like to know about your symptoms.”

Will describes his symptoms. When she has follow-up questions, she again addresses them to Hannibal, who redirects them to Will.

Once Erika is done with her questions and is pissed off, she leads them down the hall, where the end holds a small circular anteroom that leads to around a half-dozen exam rooms. The MA points them toward a dilapidated room with horrible fluorescent lighting.

Hannibal ignores her and takes a modern room brightly lit by the mid-morning sun through the tall window. He sits in the corner, leaving a chair between his and the one at the physician’s terminal. Will sits in the remaining patient chair.

Hannibal sits and smirks listening to Ms. Erika Johnson, MA. She is down the hall, complaining about Hannibal and Will to the doctor they are here to see. Hannibal sits with his arm across the back of Will’s chair, his palm between the omega’s shoulder blades, gently stroking his back.

When the door opens, Will freezes. Hannibal is immediately on edge when he scents the acidic tang that clouds Will’s usual musk. Hannibal stands and shakes Dr. Sutcliffe’s hand, who does not offer to shake Will’s. Will avoids eye contact with them both and has slipped into the servile, ignorable persona he once hid behind. His scent is bitter with acid.

“When you called to get an appointment for your partner, I wasn’t expecting… Well, I wasn’t expecting Will here,” Sutcliffe confesses. “We have a different appointment calendar for omegas here at the hospital.”

“Will is my partner, which makes Will’s legal status and the other calendar system irrelevant to me,” Hannibal says glibly.

Dr. Sutcliffe does not like this but says nothing. He proceeds to ask the same questions Erika did, also asking them at Hannibal. Hannibal again demurs to Will for answers; his joy in Sutcliffe's discomfort is more incredible than Will's displeasure.

"We can get him in for blood next week and an MRI … in December."

It is the second week of October. Hannibal's anger is radiating off of him.

"Put the orders in," Hannibal directs him. "I will schedule his appointments."

Then Hannibal stands, helping Will to his feet, and walks out of the room, down the hallway, and back towards the elevator.

"Thank you for trying," Will whispers, staring at the elevator doors.

Hannibal steps up behind him and wraps his arms around Will's chest. "Do not thank me just yet," Hannibal advises.

They stop on the third floor, where Hannibal finds a nurse's station devoid of nurses. He pulls up Will's chart, where the orders are in the system. Hannibal prints the labels for Will's bloodwork and leads him to a nearby empty exam room, where Hannibal proceeds to draw Will's blood expertly.

"You're good at everything, aren't you?" Will says a little breathy when the last vial was drawn, not from blood loss.

Hannibal pauses, placing gauze on the puncture mark. He looks Will in the eye, the first look they've shared since before their encounter with Erika Johnson and Donald Sutcliffe.

"I endeavor to excel in everything I try, though I will admit that sometimes I need to practice," Hannibal smirks. Whatever Hannibal wants to practice with Will, he is ready for it. Will's expressive eyes blaze with heat.

"MRI next, then one errand before home." He helps Will to his feet, then playfully slaps his butt on the way out the door. Will blushes.

They have to walk a block to the imaging department. Hannibal excuses himself from Will and goes to talk to a nurse at the counter. After some back-and-forth whispering, she steps away, blushing. Hannibal gestures him over.

"What did you say to her?" Will asks, his tone is somewhat angry.

"I was able to sweet-talk her into getting you an MRI presently," he reports, happy with himself.

"I'm not entirely thrilled with you sweet-talking other people," Will admits, walking past Hannibal through the door Nurse Flirts-a-lot went through.

Hannibal smirks; he is happy that Will cares and unsure if he wants to do it in the future to provoke him. It's always good to have options. Hannibal talks to the radiography technician

who will run the machine while Will changes into a gown and is de-metaled for the MRI. After an hour in the machine enclosed in the loud banging of the magnet, Will is ejected from the tube. He finds Hannibal sitting on the bench in his changing area.

“Get a date with the radiographer?” Will says grumpily.

“She’s a lesbian, no luck this time,” Hannibal says, affecting a melancholy tone.

Will stays quiet. He knows it is a joke but doesn’t like not knowing whether it is at his expense. He gets dressed in quiet, stewing in his turmoil.

“Will,” Hannibal says when they are ready to depart, holding Will’s watch, engraved side up. Hannibal is seated still while Will stands; the height difference gives the gesture ‘down on one knee’ vibes.

“I will marry you the moment you say ‘yes.’ So I need you to understand this sooner rather than later.” He stands so that he can step closer and speak more softly. “I will do whatever it takes to care for you, to protect you. *Anything*. While I would never cheat on you or betray your confidence, I am not above deception to aid my efforts. I will happily hunt down any who hurt you. I will raze cities to the ground. Do not doubt my sincerity, Will, not about you.”

Holding onto Hannibal’s wrist, his hand still holding the watch, Will kisses him.

“Help me,” Will asks, offering to let Hannibal slip the watch on and lock it in place. “Thank you.” He says with an added kiss.

“How do you know Sutcliffe,” Hannibal inquires, removing the honorific from the man. He is reflecting on Will’s reaction in the exam room.

“He was partners with my owner at the time, Dr. Chilton?” Hannibal nods, indicating his familiarity. “They…were cruel. Chilton knew psychologically what I was; he loved it. They…made me watch. Not just regular sex, but absolutely horrific…” Hannibal cuts him off. He doesn’t need to hear it; it would make Will relive it. He holds him, stroking Will’s back along the spine, holding him close until Will is ready to go.

The last errand is a trip to the tailor for measurements—Hannibal parks in front of a red brick building with a classic green awning.

“You don’t speak Italian in addition to French, do you?” Hannibal asks, unbuckling from his seat.

“Non,” Will replies in a French accent. “Why?”

“Signore Gallo and his assistant don’t speak English. Do you mind if I translate?” Hannibal is wary of taking any autonomy away from Will.

“I’d prefer if you did all the talking. I have no idea what I’m doing, and I’m already getting anxious. I’ve heard of other omegas getting the worst treatment from customer service.”

“Similar to Ms. Johnson, I imagine?”

Will nods.

“Signore Gallo just knows you’re my partner needing a new wardrobe. But if you prefer I was a more active participant, I am happy to oblige.”

Will nods again. Hannibal holds his hand on the way into the shop.

They are almost immediately intercepted by a young beta woman speaking rapid-fire Italian. Hannibal replies smoothly, their exchange pleasant. He helps Will out of his overcoat before taking off his own. He hands both to the young woman, who is out of sight just as quickly as she appears.

“She seems nice,” Will jokes.

“She is,” Hannibal confirms. “I hope a whiskey is okay; it’s what I usually take here, and I told her to get two.”

Will nods but stays quiet. Hannibal notices.

“You have never had whiskey,” Hannibal says, not asking.

“I got the bottom of the glasses when I cleaned them, the dregs. No one leaves any behind in a whiskey glass.” Will doesn’t sound upset or resentful; he gave up on those feelings after many years of letting them simmer; they didn’t change anything. Will can see Hannibal getting angry.

“You can’t turn back time. I’m here now; let’s enjoy what we have,” Will offers, reaching out to Hannibal to brush a nonexistent stray lock of hair back into place. Hannibal nods, tilting his head towards the touch. Will knows the issue of his previous living conditions isn’t being dropped; it’s being dropped *for now*.

The assistant reappears with a tray of two whiskeys. When Will collects his drink, he offers a “*Grazie*.” Hannibal smiles at him for the effort. Maybe Will will work on learning Italian, especially if it makes the older man smile like that.

The assistant leads them into the adjoining fitting room, where an immaculately well-dressed beta man bustles about getting ready. In a flurry of rapid Italian, Will is relieved of his jacket and escorted to the small stage in front of mirrors. He can see Hannibal smiling behind him.

“You really have to stop looking at me like that,” Will instructs, a smile on his face.

“I still haven’t heard a good reason why,” Hannibal informs him.

“Because there are people here, and the things we’d get into should be private,” He confirms; his tone is sweet, but his intentions are explicit.

Hannibal steps up to collect Will’s empty glass and steals a kiss before the tailor dismisses him. If this is how Will reacts, he’ll have to get him to drink whiskey more often.

Signore Gallo is done quickly and sends them away with a large book of fabric swatches and instructions to Hannibal. Will promptly grabs the book by its attached handle before Hannibal can attempt to carry it, and they walk with it to the car.

When he gets in the car, Hannibal is fuming. He sits, clearly angry, and the burnt garlic scent quickly infuses the interior. Hannibal does not move to start the car but does not say anything either.

“What?” Will finally prompts.

“Every servile action you take is a reminder. It reinforces what society deems you to be. It is a reminder of what has been done to you. Not just to them but to me. It hurts me to watch you lower yourself.” Hannibal is practically shaking. Angry because Will carried the fabric book.

“Have you seen this book before?” Will asks, lifting the book slightly before letting it slide to the footwell.

“Yes.”

“And did you carry it, or did you call someone to carry it for you?” Will asks, tone neutral“I carried it,” Hannibal replies, still angry.

“Because you’re capable,” Will confirms. “So when you do it, it’s a sign of self-sufficiency. But when I do it, it’s an act of servitude?”

“I want to take care of you,” Hannibal implores, his anger morphing into something closer to grief.

“You are. You do,” Will assures. “But you also said you want me to have autonomy. If I pick up a book, you need to see it as my actions, not a conditioned response.”

Hannibal nods reluctantly, coming around to Will’s point; he picks up Will’s hand to kiss his knuckles before starting the car and driving them home. They drive home holding hands. With his thumb, Will rubs the back of Hannibal’s hand, causing Hannibal to smile warmly.

As they pull up to the house, a phone rings. Since only Hannibal has Will’s number, they know it is Hannibal’s. The caller ID says it’s a Johns Hopkins number—Hannibal answers, “Dr. Lecter,” to set the tone for the phone call. From Will’s perspective, Hannibal is playing at being professional but is actually telling whoever it is that they are useless and not long for this world. After a few more exchanges, Hannibal hangs up.

“You were right, it’s encephalitis,” Will concludes.

“Yes.”

“And?”

“And, normally, they would check you into the hospital, but since they refuse to treat you like my partner, they are allowing me to treat you at home. Supplies will arrive later this afternoon.”

Will knows that doctors are not allowed to treat family members. But he also knows that an unbonded omega isn't considered a person, so there is no rule against doctors treating their personal property.

They make their way into the house.

"It's late for lunch but early for dinner; do you have any issues with me cooking now?" Hannibal asks.

"As long as I can help," Will replies. Hannibal agrees with a small smile.
Will washes and dices vegetables while Hannibal prepares the meat. Once they are ready to cook, Will retrieves rice from the pantry after receiving directions to its location.

"How do you pick them?" Will says perfectly calmly, not putting on any disingenuous front.

Hannibal is warming sesame oil in a small wok. His face does not indicate he heard, but Will waits, knowing he heard.

"Why are you doing this?" Hannibal asks, continuing his cooking as if the conversation isn't happening.

"Because," he starts, setting the rice on the burner to cook and turning to Hannibal, "you made me a part of this because I want to be a part of this. Because being with you means all of you. Even this part."

Will lifts his hand towards Hannibal to touch his shoulder. He moves slowly so Hannibal can see him and understand that it isn't an attack—like you would approach a wild animal, like a tiger. Hannibal lets Will touch him, and he folds—the hard exterior melts—and collapses into Will's arms. The omega soothes the alpha, instincts aligning with their conscious need.

"How?" Hannibal asks. Will doesn't understand Hannibal's question and rubs his back through the waistcoat and shirt. "How can you take this on?" Hannibal finishes.

Will carefully maneuvers Hannibal so that he can look at his face without letting go of him or pushing him away.

"It's you," Will tells him.

"But your empathy. You know what letting this, what letting me in, will do."

Will understands his hesitance now. Hannibal was drawn to Will because of Will's ability to empathize with all people and step into the shoes of anyone. But Hannibal worries that Will's pure empathy will scare Will away, being able to see all of Hannibal and leave Hannibal alone again.

"I'm here, Hannibal," he explains. "This is us. We aren't perfect. But you were right; we are two sides of a coin."
Will pulls Hannibal into a kiss. His mouth is passionate and insistent. He is granted entry when he licks Hannibal's lips, and their tongues explore one another. Their hands roam their bodies, lithe muscles under too many layers of clothes.

They are lost in each other until Hannibal smells the burning sesame oil.

“Damn,” he says and then chuckles; the two men are still wrapped around one another.

Separating, he pours the oil into a glass container and wipes the wok with a paper towel before adding more oil to try again. Will checks the rice, and it still has a few minutes.

“It is people like Erika Johnson or Sutcliffe and Chilton. People who choose to be horrible when apathy would be a better solution,” Hannibal finally answers. He adds the meat to the wok.

“You choose them because they’re rude to you,” Will summarizes. “Or rude to me, now. Apparently.”

“Yes,” Hannibal admits.

“But someone would make the connection if Ms. Johnson was rude to me today and was reported missing tomorrow?” Will says, stealing a piece of carrot to eat while Hannibal adds the rest of the vegetables to the wok.

“I wait. I have a queue, and I figure out when the time is right.” Hannibal adds soy and oyster sauces to the wok with one hand while the other keeps the food moving, tossing it in the wok.

“And then what?” Will asks.

Hannibal looks at Will as he cooks, tossing and catching the stir fry in the air. His eyes are diverted from the food, but his skill in the kitchen remains incredible.

“Oh,” Will says. He thinks about the meals they had shared: seafood and eggs.

“What are we having tonight?” Will asks, clearly understanding Hannibal.

“Mongolian…pork,” he says, betraying nothing.

“Hmm,” Will says in acceptance. “Let me know the next time you . . . go to the butcher.”

Hannibal is curious. His raised eyebrow is enough of a signal, but he also provides an “I will.”

Hannibal is plating when the doorbell rings. After a moment, Will looks at Hannibal and says, “I’ll get it.” Hannibal smiles.

“Mr. Lecter,” the delivery driver at the door asks.

Will doesn’t know what to say; Hannibal is ‘Doctor Lecter’ and even ‘Count Lecter,’ so that leaves him. Will says, “Yes.”

The driver hands Will a delivery manifest and describes each item he brings into the house so that Will can compare it against the paper on the clipboard. Once they have gone through everything, he asks Will to sign. Will has never signed anything, and officially, he doesn’t

have a signature since he isn't legally a person. But he makes an illegible scribble where indicated, which seems to suffice. He locks the door behind the man."“You're now the proud owner of many new medical supplies,” Will announces in the dining room, where Hannibal has their plated dinners and a bottle of red wine.

“I'll get glasses,” Will offers, handing the documentation to Hannibal before heading into the kitchen.

Will returns with two red glasses, which pleases Hannibal since most people can't discern one wine glass from another.

“You have quite a signature,” Hannibal offers, joking over the scribbled signature.

“I've never signed anything, so I figure it's pretty good for a first time,” Will replies, not wanting to slip into self-deprecation mode as he usually would.

“It is,” Hannibal agrees, kissing Will before they sit in the same spots they had the night before.

Hannibal spends their dinner explaining what medications Will will be on and what he can expect. He allows Will not to go on an IV if the omega agrees to stay hydrated and his symptoms don't worsen.

After the tiring day, they agreed to skip dessert and opted for a second glass of wine to finish the bottle.
Will agrees to let Hannibal clean up as long as he can sit in the kitchen with him while he works.

“Is it still Friday?” Will asks, rubbing his eyes with the heels of his palms.

“Yes,” Hannibal replies, suddenly worried about Will's illness. When Will looks at Hannibal, he chuckles, which doesn't reassure Hannibal.

“I mean, the last two days have been monumental and probably could have been stretched over a few weeks.”
Hannibal smiles, “I agree. The pacing of such dramatic events should be spread farther apart. I will endeavor to do so in the future.” He laughs at the idea.

Hannibal lets Will carry the lighter box of supplies upstairs while Hannibal delivers the three heavier ones. Once upstairs, Hannibal unpacks the medical supplies. Will moves the IV stand into the room's far corner, hoping not to need it.

Hannibal gives Will two injections and then a handful of pills to swallow with the glass of water from his nightstand.

“Finish the glass, and I will get you another,” Hannibal directs. Will complies, however reluctantly. “Shower?” he asks when Will returns from the en suite.

“I think so, between being in the hospital, the MRI machine, and then getting groped by Signore Gallo, I need to feel clean.”

“Will,” Hannibal stops him before he gets too far. “I know you are joking, but if anyone ever touches you inappropriately or without your permission…” He doesn’t finish the sentence since Will understands.

"I will keep that in mind."

They take turns showering, though neither of them makes an effort to shield themselves or their eyes. They then continue to dress and get ready for bed.

“I meant to ask before, any preference on my facial hair?"

Hannibal looks at Will, slightly put out.

“Will, I want you to do what makes you happy,” Hannibal says in a tone that was tired of having said this before.

Will smirks and steps in close to Hannibal. “And like you told me, I would tell you if I had a preference. But I don’t care, and I thought you might. Just like I would tell you not to cut your hair any shorter.” Will says, carding through Hannibal’s hair before giving it a gentle tug so he can kiss Hannibal more easily, which he does.

“Oh,” Hannibal says when finally released from the kiss. He has a smile that lights up Will’s heart. “I like the stubble. Is that an option?”

“It is. I know a very nice man who bought me a trimmer,” Will jokes.

The two are kissing lazily, exploring one another, when their knees hit the bed, and they fall onto their sides. They pause for a second to laugh but then promptly resume their kissing. Hannibal pivots, lying on top of Will, his forearms bearing his weight, while they continue to kiss. This new position means Hannibal’s hands aren’t as free to roam on Will as previously, but it does mean being able to feel Will’s erection pressing against him through their pajamas.

Will is trying to keep their kissing slow and unhurried, but the more they kiss, the more slick leaks from him. In the next moment, Will is aware that he is rutting against Hannibal; the pressure of their hips seems enjoyable to both.

Will pulls away for a pause, turning his head slightly embarrassed. “Sorry,” he croaks, his voice raspy with excitement. Hannibal kisses his hairline, getting the benefit of skin-on-skin, plus those beautiful curls.

“Nothing to be sorry for.” Hannibal is planting closed-mouth kisses on Will’s jawline between each word.
“How,” *kiss*.
“Do,” *kiss*.
“You,” *kiss*.
“Know,” *kiss*.
“Where,” *kiss*.
“The line,” *kiss*.
“Is,” *kiss*.

“If you,” *kiss*.
“Don’t,” *kiss*.
“Push,” *kiss*.
“Against it,” *kiss*.

He reluctantly rolls off of Will but puts his hand on the omega’s forehead to check his temperature. “Your temperature seems good, but I will have to wake you up at six to give you your next dose.”

Will hums in acknowledgment.

Will doesn’t have to ask this time; Hannibal pulls him close to wrap him up, a big spoon to Will’s little.

Sleeping In

Chapter Summary

Hannibal doesn’t want to get out of bed this time because Will is having a good dream, and Hannibal seems to be featured in it.

Chapter Notes

Enjoying a day at home, the boys explore...each other.

Here's some smut, you lovely, wacky people. (My kind of people)

They wake up similarly to the previous morning. Hannibal is awake first, and they are both hard. Unlike the day before, they had spun during the night, and Will is the big spoon, his pajama-clad erection pressed against Hannibal’s firm ass.

Hannibal doesn’t want to get out of bed this time because Will is having a good dream, and Hannibal seems to be featured in it.

“But I’ve been such a good boy,” Will begs. “Please, Han.” Will is grinding into Hannibal. He keeps swearing he’s been a good boy and will be again, with ‘Han’ and ‘Hannibal’ falling off his lips in prayer.

Hannibal feels Will's body stiffen for a fraction of a second when he wakes up. “Good morning, Will.”

“Mmm,” Will agrees, melting against the alpha again, nuzzling his nose into Hannibal's hair and neck and not pulling his hips away. Hannibal has been enjoying the commentary of Will’s dream, and the room is permeated with the scent of the alpha’s arousal.

Will plants a chaste kiss against the back of Hannibal’s neck. “I suppose you want to get up.” Will brushes his hand down Hannibal’s abdomen before he brushes the tented pajamas.

“You can ignore that,” Hannibal offers, having a pleasurable enough start to his morning.

“Would you . . .” Will starts hesitantly. “Can I watch you?” Hannibal pauses for a moment to consider.

“If,” Hannibal starts, grabbing himself at the base and removing his dick from his pajamas. “If you promise to be a good boy.”

“Fuck,” Will moans into Hannibal’s ear, more slick leaking from his between his ass cheeks, his eyes glued to the show Hannibal is giving him.

Hannibal begins in a steady rhythm, Will’s hips mimicking, thrusting against his back. “I will be such a good boy, Han. So good to you.” He promises repeatedly, his words starting to catch as both Hannibal’s hand and Will’s hips pick up the pace.

“Such a good boy,” Hannibal confirms.

“Fuck. Hannibal!” Will cums at Hannibal’s praise, his pajama bottoms wet on the front and back. Hannibal soon follows with the scent of Will’s pleasure, pulling him over the edge, cumming with Will’s name on his lips.
Hannibal turns to Will, catching his face in his hands, and kisses him urgently and passionately. Soon, Will is straddling Hannibal’s hips, kissing each other brutally as if they need it to live.

Will finally pulls back when he needs the air. They are both panting, their lips swollen and bruised. Will sees Hannibal’s face flushed and follows the coloration down his throat, undoing his pajama top to find out where the pink skin leads. Hannibal’s chest is dusted with hair, and Will runs his fingers through it, enjoying the sensation. The dusting of hair continues lower; Will has seen both this morning and the shower last night. This feels more intimate, though. Their guards are down, so now they can explore.

Hannibal reaches up to undo Will’s top to mirror his exploration. Hannibal loves Will’s smooth chest, which leads to firm abs dusted with a trail of dark hair. Hannibal is soaking in every inch of skin he discovers in his exploration.

“Have *you* ever been with a man before?” Will asks. Hannibal’s curious exploration was making him wonder.

“Define ‘been with.’”

“Okay, Mr. President,” Will jokes. “Have you had anal sex with a man?”

“No.”

“Neither give or receive?”

“Correct.”

“Oral sex?”

“I have received fellatio from a man. I have never performed it, and I have never experienced oral-anal stimulation or fingering from a man as either the performer or recipient.”

Will is a bit shocked. Hannibal seems so experienced and exceptional in everything he does that Will can hardly believe they would be each other’s first.

“I feel like we might be at a disadvantage,” Will chuckles, flattening out and laying on Hannibal, who welcomes him and pulls him close.

“Well, I am a doctor,” he starts, earning a chuckle from Will. He pokes Will in the ribs for the impertinence, who laughs and squirms at being tickled. “Besides, the internet has many reliable sources as well.”

“So I’ve heard,” Will jokes, referencing all the porn-related internet references he knew.

Hannibal moves his head, however awkwardly, to look at Will. “You have never been on the internet.” It isn’t a question.

“I’m going to shower,” Will tells Hannibal, ignoring the conversation. He sheds his clothes; he knows their pajamas will be destined for the washing machine, if not the garbage.

Will is rinsing off when Hannibal steps into the shower behind him. Will gets nervous as Hannibal touches his shoulder and slides it down his back. He begins to massage Will’s right ass cheek, and Will is slowly becoming less nervous when Hannibal stabs him with a needle.

Will turns, and Hannibal is smirking.

“You needed your morning dose.”

“I thought there were two?”

Hannibal stabs him again, this time facing him instead of behind his back.

“There are.”

He turns to step out of the shower when Will slaps his ass.

“Promises, promises,” Hannibal calls over his shoulder, heading to prepare for the day.

Once again, Hannibal gets ready for the day in another bedroom, giving Will his privacy. Will takes the opportunity to try the beard trimmer, cutting back some of the length on his fledgling beard. He thinks his efforts look good, but he’ll get Hannibal’s opinion for better accuracy; Hannibal’s is the only opinion that matters in this case. He sees his pills on the vanity counter and takes them with a whole glass of water since he knows Hannibal will ask.

Upon arriving in the kitchen, Hannibal first asks about the water and then approves of Will’s trim. Hannibal turns and puts a pie dish in the oven.

“Quiche?” Will asks. He receives a nod and a cup of coffee from Hannibal.

Hannibal stands in front of Will, too close for anyone you weren’t intimate with, which makes the proximity both allowable and welcome.

“Say it,” Will prompts before continuing to drink his coffee, knowing Hannibal wants to say something.

“Would you join me in the study this morning?”

“Yes,” Will says, expecting there to be more, a catch.

“Good,” Hannibal says before stepping away to finish breakfast preparations.

Will pours himself a second cup of coffee; Hannibal advises him against a third, noting that the caffeine will dehydrate him and potentially exacerbate his symptoms. Will agrees that two will be his limit.

After breakfast, Will goes to the study with a large glass of water.

The high-ceiling room is painted cream, but the large bookshelf that takes up the far wall is the same dark blue as the dining room. The floor is wide plank, dark hardwood, but most of the room is covered by a large, silk kilim rug in a pattern of cream and brown. A pale, cream sofa faces the fireplace on the right, with a glass-topped, wooden-legged coffee table in front. Two wing-back chairs that match the couch are in front of the bookcase, with small wooden side tables beside them. To the right of the door is a small, piano-like object that Will assumes is a harpsichord. Will has never seen one, but Hannibal mentioned it in conversations long ago. He remembers the happiness that filled Hannibal’s eyes when he spoke of the instrument and hopes to one day hear him play. A hope that seemed unlikely at the time.

Will sits on the sofa, placing his glass on a coaster on the table. Next to it is the fabric book he carried to the car yesterday. As Will guesses, Hannibal goes through the book for them to make selections for his wardrobe, where he offers Will options and allows the younger man his preferences. He doesn’t leave some decisions to Will and tells Will as much. Hannibal shows Will how to access the internet on his phone and leaves him to it while he continues documenting their choices for the tailor.

With that done, Hannibal shows him some sites to return to, including Reddit, YouTube, Google, and Instagram, and how to bookmark them as they navigate. Hannibal offers to create an email account for Will to get logins for (since he isn’t legally allowed one of his own), but Will says he isn’t interested in diving in yet and prefers to observe it from the outside. Hannibal lets Will navigate on his phone while he starts researching on his tablet. It takes a moment's work, the image of a single diagram on the tablet, to catch Will’s attention, and the omega moves so that the two are side-by-side. They stay on educational sites, getting some good dos and don’ts about male-male sexual activities, focusing on alpha-omega activities. Once they hit the same tips the third time, with nothing new to learn from an educational perspective, they leave the research alone.

“That was informative,” Will says slowly, enunciating each word.

“Agreed,” Hannibal says, closing up his tablet and busying his hands by rubbing Will’s side and combing his fingers through his hair. Will wiggles in closer, his head on Hannibal’s chest.

“Do you want to talk about any of it?” Hannibal asks.

“Can it wait?” Will asks.

“As long as you want.”

Hannibal and Will make lunch together, and after they eat, Hannibal gives him a proper house tour. Will notices that the tour doesn't include the basement and decides not to press it. Hannibal will eventually show him.
Will asks for his next dose and is rewarded when Hannibal skips the dramatics, giving him his next dose in the dining room. "No wonder you left surgery," Will says when Hannibal is disarmed. "Such mercurial bedside manners." With a feral grin, Hannibal tackles Will around the midsection and lifts him over his shoulder. Will is laughing and kicking the whole time. He carries him back to the study and throws him onto the sofa.

"I can't tell if you're the knight here to rescue me or the villain who put me in the tower," Will laughs. He runs his fingers through Hannibal's hair as he lays down on top of Will. His other hand is on Hannibal's back, under the cashmere sweater he is wearing, touching his bare skin. Hannibal is nuzzling Will, rubbing his nose against his jawline and neck, basking in the warmth of the omega's scent.

"That depends," Hannibal replies.

"On?"

Hannibal tilts to whisper in his ear. "On whether you're a good boy or a bad boy."

"Fuck," Will moans, bucking into Hannibal's hips.

"I want to taste you, Will. Can I?" his voice is needy, and his breath is hot against Will's neck and ear. Will grunts his indecision. "You've been such a good boy; you deserve a treat." Hannibal slides a hand between them and is cupping Will's erection.

"Yes! Han, yes," Will relents.

Hannibal kisses him passionately on the lips before sliding down his body. Will starts to moan but stops. Hannibal glances up as he unbuckles Will's belt and sees Will biting his lip. He pulls on Will's lip with his thumb.

"Don't do that. Let me hear you," Hannibal asks; Will nods.

Hannibal lifts Will by the hips and pulls down his jeans and boxers in one motion. Will's erection bobs free, slick, already starting to leak from his tight pink hole. Will looks down and sees Hannibal smile; he thinks, we're made for each other.

With a hand on Will's pelvis, Hannibal begins to lick the length of Will's dick slowly. He pays particular attention around the head, enjoying Will's soft moans. Hannibal cups Will's balls with his other hand, gently stroking them and massaging them while he continues his slow exploration with his tongue, licking up the precum that leaks from Hannibal's attention.

"Han, Han, I need more," Will finally begs. And Hannibal is feeling benevolent.

"Good boy," he praises, wrapping his mouth around the head.

"Fuck," Will groans. The wet heat of Hannibal's mouth feels amazing.

Hannibal begins to lower and raise his head, bobbing on Will's dick; the wet sounds of his mouth are filthy and fill the room, accompanying Will's steady moans of praise and encouragement.

After days or several minutes, Will isn't sure. Hannibal stops to look at Will. Will's eyes open, bereft of Hannibal's fantastic mouth and tongue.

"Wha?" Will can't form a proper question.

"I want to taste you, good boy. Will you come in my mouth?" Hannibal quickly wraps his mouth around Will again, not waiting for him to reply.

Will bucks his hips, fucking into Hannibal's waiting mouth.

"Fu..da…Hannibal!" Will cums, pulsing into Hannibal's mouth, who swallows his release.

Hannibal lets Will go gently from his mouth, careful to avoid overstimulation. Hannibal rolls to kneel on the floor, moving to kiss Will.

"You are amazing, Will," Hannibal says, stroking his curly hair

"Me? I'm amazing? That was the best damn orgasm of my life," Will declares.

"Language," Hannibal warns. He gently brushes the curls from Will's face, and when they defiantly return, he brushes them again.

"Sorry, Dr. Lecter," Will replies, only half sassy.

Hannibal pinches the sensitive skin on Will's inner thigh with his other hand.

"Ow! What was that for?"

"Sass."

Hannibal stands and leaves the room. Will stands to redress himself. When he sits back down, Hannibal returns with a glass of orange juice.

"Thank you," Will says with a tinge of suspicion.

"If we are going to engage in *more rigorous* activities, you'll need to drink more fluids."

"Ah. Well, I'm glad that isn't against the rules." Will smiles before he drinks his juice, finishing the tall glass in three long pulls.

"Me too," Hannibal says before kissing Will and returning the empty glass to the kitchen.

Sunday Troubles

Chapter Summary

Hannibal is lost. The man in front of him, this beautiful man, can see him, all of him and accept him. But he's misstepped with Will, something he was so careful never to do.

~*~

Hannibal makes a poor decision and communicates it even more poorly.

Chapter Notes

Angst warning. For real, this one hurts.
Maybe take a break first. Or get a cookie or three? Hot cocoa?

At least this chapter in shorter...?

Don't forget to drink your water, folkx.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will wakes up the following day to discover he is the only spoon in the drawer, though he hears the distant sounds in the kitchen and smells a collection of mouthwatering aromas drifting into the bedroom.

On the bathroom vanity, Will finds two syringes and his pills. Will takes the pills and manages, though awkwardly, to inject himself in the butt muscle. Seeing himself twist naked in the mirror reminds him of a baby deer and almost makes him miss Hannibal's bedside manner.

Showered and dressed, Will makes his way towards the kitchen. Based on the noises, Hannibal has finished cooking and is cleaning up. Based on the spread of food waiting on the dining room table, he is correct since there is unlikely to be any other food Hannibal can make. He is still inspecting the buffet on the table when Hannibal comes in, expertly carrying two mugs of coffee and two glasses of orange juice, which he places in front of their usual dinner spots.

"Good morning, Will," he says with a kiss.

Will kisses back but is interrupted by Hannibal ushering him into his seat.

“Good morning,” he paused. “Why are you nervous?” Will asks, scenting a slight char to the alpha’s regular warm butter scent. Will starts with coffee, waiting for Hannibal to answer while he loads Will’s plate with eggs, half a steak, and shredded hash browns.

Observing, what Will sees is quick, most people won’t even notice the flinch. Most people wouldn’t see a single thing change about Hannibal. But Will isn’t like most people. There is a micro-pause to his movements, a slightly longer blink, and a twitch at the corners of his mouth. All is gone in a split second, but they were there.

“I have to go out today,” Hannibal says, he is avoiding eye contact. He knows it will give away his cards if he looks Will in the eye.

“And you want me to stay here,” Will confirms.

“I wanted to throw a dinner party for us Friday night,” Hannibal continues.

“And you’re going out for…supplies,” Will continues, stating that both men understand the implication of ‘supplies.’

“Yes,” Hannibal says softly. He switches the subject, “You haven’t eaten anything yet.”

“Look at me, please,” Will asks, the need evident in his voice; Hannibal can’t deny him. He doesn’t.

“Just be careful,” he directs the older man. “And when you get home, I’ll help with any preparations.”

Hannibal wants to argue and is about to argue, but he looks at Will. And knows Will will be okay, okay with him, with this. He nods.

Will begins to eat his breakfast. Hannibal takes a deep breath; the weight on his chest is gone.

“Who is coming to dinner?” Will asks between bites. Hannibal fills the gaps in Will’s plate with a tropical fruit salad.

“A few friends from the opera, the Komedas. A former mentee and colleague, Dr. Bloom,” Hannibal starts.

“A therapist,” the thought of being inspected again makes Will put down his fork. Hannibal frowns. “Yes, but don’t worry, I won’t tolerate rudeness at our table,” Will smirks and nods.

“Anyone else?”

Hannibal starts to clear empty plates, avoiding answering the question right away.

“I was going to invite Drs. Sutcliffe and Chilton,” Hannibal says softly, hoping to lessen the blow.

Will stands up abruptly and begins clearing the table despite his plate still having plenty of food on it. Hannibal frowns again. The conversation is not going how he's hoped, but his predictions around Will are less accurate. Hannibal can predict the average person, but Will is not average; he is exceptional.
Hannibal rushes to get glass food containers, collecting the uneaten food for later. Will is angrily stacking dishes into the dishwasher. Neither knew it was something that can be done angrily, yet they are both experiencing it.

"Will, say something," he begs.

Will begins to pace around the kitchen, taking turns rubbing his face and pulling on his hair. He adds the dining room to his circuit when his pacing of the kitchen proves ineffective. When Will's next lap has him approach the kitchen island, Hannibal stands in his way.

"I have a reason," Hannibal promises in consolation.

Will looks him in the eyes. Hannibal's eyes are full of concern and resolve, while Will's are full of unshed tears, anguish, and anger. The alpha can smell the distress coming from the omega.
Hannibal reaches out, hoping to pull Will into his arms; Will allows him to. With right arms across each other's shoulders and neck and left arms around the ribs, they pull each other closer.

But Will isn't crying; he isn't making any sound beyond breathing.

"Tell me," Will whispers.

When Hannibal says nothing, he presses. "Tell me why you would invite them here." His voice is a mixture of anger and sadness; he feels betrayed.

Hannibal tries to lean back to look at Will and explain it. When he pulls back, Will breaks away entirely, leaving Hannibal with no one in his arms. Will takes a few steps back. His back is against the refrigerator, and his arms are crossed against his chest, self-soothing and protecting himself.

Will breaks when Hannibal remains quiet while struggling to form an adequate explanation.

"You know what, you don't owe me an explanation. You don't owe me anything. I'm here by your good graces."
Hannibal flinches as if wounded. Will sees but doesn't care.

"Let me know if there is anything I can take care of while you're out, Dr. Lecter," Will says before leaving the room.

Hannibal doesn't know what to do about Will. About how he's upset him. Mechanically, he puts the leftover food in the refrigerator and leaves through the garage. He had loaded his hunting gear and a cooler in the trunk before Will had woken up. He will be back in time for dinner.

Backing out of the garage, he thinks, I hope Will remembers to take his afternoon medication.

***

When Hannibal gets home, the house is quiet. This early in the fall, there is still enough light pouring in the windows, but no other lights are on downstairs. Hannibal takes the cooler into the pantry and down to the basement, where he will finish preparing the meat tomorrow. It will be okay to rest overnight as-is.
When he returns to the kitchen, he sees the key, wallet, watch, and phone lined up in a row on the island. Hannibal doesn't need to inspect the wallet to know the card is still inside it, untouched and unused. Frustrated, he grabs the watch and bounds upstairs, taking two at a time.

The heavy curtains in the bedrooms block out most light so that Hannibal can tell Will is in a guest bedroom from the weak light coming from under the door. Hannibal walks down the hall, not hiding his footsteps, wanting to project his approach. He knocks on the door.

"Can I come in?"

"Of course," Will replies. But this time, the way he says it breaks Hannibal because it's said out of obligation, because legally, Will can't deny him, whether or not he wants to.

As Hannibal opens the door, he hears Will move, getting off the bed.

Avoiding Hannibal's eyes, Will now stands at the foot of the bed with his hands clasped in front of him.

"Why are you in here?" Hannibal asks though he knows the answer.

"Just keeping to myself. If there is somewhere better for me in the future, I'll go there." Will's tone is almost mechanical in its deference, a lifetime of programming.

"Are you going to sleep here?" Hannibal's tone is neutral, though the emotions he fights back threaten to make his voice crack. He needs Will to look at him, to see him.

"I'll sleep wherever you want me to, Dr. Lecter."

"I want you to look at me, Will."

And so Will does. Hannibal thinks he is looking at a different person. A person he met two years ago, someone forced to go to his office for conversations. Will's eyes aren't filled with tears, and his eyes aren't rimmed in red from shedding those tears. His face is flat; there are no emotions that gave shape to Will - no happiness to give him warmth, no sarcasm to light his eyes, and no care or concern for himself or Hannibal. He is empty. Even Will's scent smells off; the sweetness that reminds Hannibal of beignets is gone, and all that remains is a starchy, fried dough scent.

Will sees the cacophony of emotions bouncing around Hannibal's brain, flickering in and out of his eyes. Yesterday, he would have cared. Hell, this morning, he would have cared. But he knows now that he is a puppet. Hannibal wants to mock society and show them he is better

than they are, but Will now realizes he is the tool being used to do it. He is a rare and expensive bottle of wine you take out to show off; he is the flaunting of great seats to the opera, the sharing of a vacation story to a place no one else had been. If Hannibal wants him to play arm candy, he'll play; he has no choice. But he doesn't want to be gaslit any further. His eyes are open.

Neither of them says anything for a long time, just looking into each other's eyes.

"Your watch," Hannibal says like a question, extending it toward Will.

"I figured it was better if you held onto everything until there were guests. Or if you wanted me out with you. Whatever you'd like."

Hannibal is lost. The man in front of him, this beautiful man, can see him, all of him and accept him. But he's misstepped with Will, something he was so careful never to do, and his future is collapsing in front of him. A house of cards. He puts the watch on the table by Will's door, turns, and leaves.

He has time to prepare the meat tonight, after all. And time to drink.

They go to bed separately that night. Neither of them sleeps well.

Chapter End Notes

Don't hate me! P&TY

Back to Work

Chapter Summary

> “I invited them to keep enemies closer. I will be a less likely suspect if the world sees us socializing,” Hannibal informs him, with no preamble or warning.
>
> Will finishes his breakfast and sips his water. He hasn’t said anything since Hannibal offered his excuse.
>
> “Say something,” Hannibal prompts.
>
> “Okay,” Will says, setting down his glass.
>
> Hannibal waits in silence, willing him to say more.
>
> “What would you like to hear?”
>
> Hannibal’s guts are rolling with acid, and his head feels light.
>
> “Tell me what you think. About what I just told you. About why.”
>
> “I think that it is a very good story.”

Chapter Notes

> More angst but then resolution, so you only have to hate me for the first half.
>
> Then some smut, as an apology.

When Will walks through the kitchen, Hannibal is dressed for work. Will is wearing his worn clothes and is carrying his bed linens to the laundry room. Hannibal can smell the sweat and fear in the bedclothes.

“Night terror,” Will says by way of explanation. Only Hannibal’s room, their room, has a laundry shoot; Will wouldn’t even go in. Will comes to the island to take his pills. They sit next to the phone, key, and wallet, which Hannibal has refused to touch. Will reaches out to take the syringes that Hannibal has in his hand, but he doesn’t move to hand them to Will. “Whatever you prefer,” Will says, resigned. “Here?”

Hannibal nods. Will unbuttons his jeans and slides one side down his hip, his robotic movements exposing the top of his gluteus muscles. Will is surprised when Hannibal steps away, barely feeling anything from the exchange.

“I’m glad you took your doses yesterday,” Hannibal says. Will hums briefly in acknowledgment. Hannibal hands Will a plate of sautéed vegetables, fluffy eggs, and buttered toast, cut diagonally.

With his glass of water and the plate in hand, Will asks mechanically, “Where would you like me to sit?”

“Wherever you’d like,” Hannibal offers.

Will looks at him blankly, not with anger, indecision, or hurt. Will thinks about standing at the island and eating there, but that is petulant and also a form of decision-making. He takes the path of least resistance and sits at the island in front of him.

Hannibal sits next to Will and slides a mug of coffee toward him. Will ignores it, knowing coffee doesn’t fall into the category of “necessity” items. Hannibal notices it, too.

“I invited them to keep enemies closer. I will be a less likely suspect if the world sees us socializing,” Hannibal informs him, with no preamble or warning.

Will finishes his breakfast and sips his water. He hasn’t said anything since Hannibal offered his excuse.

“Say something,” Hannibal prompts.

“Okay,” Will says, setting down his glass.

Hannibal waits in silence, willing him to say more.

“What would you like to hear?”

Hannibal’s guts are rolling with acid, and his head feels light.

“Tell me what you think. About what I just told you. About why.”

“I think that it is a very good story.”

Hannibal is stunned. Angry. How dare Will psychoanalyze him. “And?” Hannibal prompts. Hannibal watches Will check the time on the oven. Will hasn’t put on his watch.

“I think you probably have to leave for work, and our conversation time is Thursday.”

This is unacceptable. Hannibal stands, fuming. “I’ll be home by seven tonight.”

“Understood,” Will says and begins to clear their plates. Hannibal doesn’t have the energy to argue about it. He won’t argue about it and risk breaking what little he has with Will altogether.

While cleaning up from breakfast, Will sees the empty whiskey bottle in the recycling.

Hannibal returned to the house at 6:45. He sped home, not wanting to waste a minute.

When he steps into the house, the smell hits him immediately. Will cleaned. There is the scent of furniture polish and window cleaner in the air. There is the slightly charred dust scent of a vacuum cleaner being run. There is the faded scent of laundry and fabric softener. The phone, key, and wallet remain on the island. The watch is probably still on the table in the guest bedroom (it is). The heart he would have denied possessing is breaking. Will has adopted the servant role, and Hannibal is disgusted.

A muted light is coming from the living room, so he walks toward it. Will is seated on the sofa. He is in a different outfit than he wore in the morning; he probably showered after cleaning. The clothes are the old ones he'd brought with him, and there is nothing from Hannibal's side. Will isn't moving, though Hannibal knows he isn't asleep. He is seated with excellent posture; his legs are crossed, his ankle is over his knee, and his hands are resting on his calf; his whole body is still except for his breath.

Hannibal walks into the room, his footsteps announcing him, not looking to startle Will. He sits on the ottoman directly in front of Will. They are close enough to touch each other, close enough to smell the other, but they sit there. After a few minutes, Will opens his eyes but remains motionless otherwise. Hannibal's feet are on the ground; he is leaning forward, his elbows on his knees, his hands clasped in front of him.

"Can I ask you a question?" Will leaves off the *Dr. Lecter* this time.

"Of course," Hannibal says, meaning that Will can ask him, ask of him, anything.

"Do you know what you did?" Will asks. Hannibal's head tilts and that big cat's confusion fills his features. Uncrossing his knees, planting his feet on the floor, and grounding himself for the conversation, Will helps him by clarifying.

"Do you know what your actions and choices did to me?"

"I . . ." Hannibal starts. He is a world-class psychiatrist; he studies the human condition and specializes in social exclusion. He should understand this. "I don't," he admits.

Will's face softens just a fraction. He decides to try a talk therapy approach.

"Hannibal, when you chose to invite them without talking to me first, it made me feel like a pawn. That I was a tool you were wielding to mock them and the rest of society rather than a partner with autonomy, who you might care about."

Hannibal falls forward on his knees in front of Will. He doesn't know what to do with his hands. He wants to reach out to Will and put them on his knees. Instead, he rests his palms on his chest, arms crossing at the wrists.

“I do care,” Hannibal chokes out, his voice gravelly. Will looks at him but doesn’t acknowledge.

“If a patient, a paying client, came to you and said their partner was making unilateral decisions that affected their mental health, what would you recommend?”

Hannibal falls forward, his head on the cushion between Will’s legs, and the fabric of Will’s pants brushes against Hannibal’s suit jacket. Neither of them touch the other. It is a minute before Hannibal speaks, uprighting himself again, his weight on his knees.

“I would recommend they talk to one another and come to an agreement that empowers them both, creates clear methods for communication, and ensures that both persons are included in the decision-making process.”

“Did you think I would oppose any plans that would *end* Chilton and Sutcliffe?”

“No.”

“So why not tell me?”

“I wanted to protect you!” The alpha snaps to his feet faster than Will has ever seen him move. But Will stays still. He doesn’t want to startle the jungle cat, even if his anger is pointed elsewhere.

“Hannibal,” Will says, standing slowly next to Hannibal, proximity so close that only their level of intimacy would allow it. “By keeping it from me, your plan put me on a battlefield with no armor.”
Will watches his words connect with Hannibal.

They move simultaneously, pulling each other close into the hug. Hannibal is glad Will has dressed so casually; he can easily slide his hand under his shirt and feel the skin on his back. The omega nuzzles against Hannibal’s neck, both seeking and offering comfort.

“Your armor is in my way,” Will complains about Hannibal’s wardrobe. Instead, he runs his hands through Hannibal’s hair and caresses his neck. They kiss, their hands continuing their ministrations, their mouths, tongues, and teeth trying to claim to join the two.

Hannibal breaks the kiss, panting. “Dinner or bed?”

“You need to eat,” Will concedes. His arm is around Hannibal, and he leads them to the kitchen.

“How do you know?” Hannibal asks while Will reheats the breakfast that wasn’t finished, making them both a fresh plate of eggs.

“You didn’t bring any food with you when you left. I know you won’t get takeout, so I figured you didn’t eat anything.” Hannibal nods along with Will’s observations.

Hannibal sits at the island, silently appreciating Will. He finally says, “Thank you” *for taking care of dinner, for your forgiveness, for seeing me, for accepting me*.

“Of course,” Will says, it is one of the good ones.

They eat slowly, with Will’s dominant hand held in Hannibal’s, while Hannibal keeps stopping to kiss Will—his hand, face, whatever he can reach.

The conversation is casual and domestic - how many patients does Hannibal typically see in a week? What preparations need to happen for a dinner party? When will Will’s wardrobe arrive?

- Typically, five or six daily, Monday through Thursday, and two on Friday morning.
- There was a delivery from the produce store, another from the party supply store for chairs and tables, the pastries the morning of, and catering staff that afternoon. The cleaners would be in Friday morning and again Saturday for the aftermath.
- Will’s suit for the party and more everyday items will be delivered on Thursday; the remaining suits and other items will arrive in the next few weeks.

They clear the table together, skipping coffee or alcohol after dinner.

Rather than disappear to another room, they both head to their bedroom. The pajamas they wore the first night are clean, part of Will’s efforts today, and are on a shelf in their closet.

Hannibal turns on the shower halfway through his disrobing. Will is sitting on the bed in his boxers, having fewer layers to doff.

Hannibal walks over slowly to Will, standing in front of him. “Can I wash you?” His alpha instincts are screaming to take care of the omega.

Will doesn’t answer, weighing the question and his decision.

“I . . . I want to...” Hannibal tries to explain

“Take care of me,” Will finishes.

Hannibal nods. Will nods and stands, sliding his boxers down as he stands. Will steps into the shower, standing under the cascading water. He watches Hannibal remove the last of his armor, stepping naked under the water with Will. Hannibal starts with Will’s hair, massaging the shampoo on his scalp and building a lather amongst his curls. The omega leans into the firm but careful touch. While Will rinses, Hannibal quickly shampoos himself, far less gently. Hannibal rinses his hair as he slowly massages Will’s curly hair conditioner into his locks.

Hannibal takes the bar of soap and works a lather with his hands, slowly, deliberately, rubbing Will’s shoulders and arms, then onto his back, turning him to get his chest. Hannibal kneels in front of Will, causing the omega to gasp. Hannibal looks at him with a gentle but apologetic look, a slight shake of *no*. He taps Will’s ankle with his hand, putting Will’s foot on his knee. He soaps Will’s calf and quads, and he does the same when one foot replaces the other. Standing, he steps Will under the shower to rinse off the conditioner and soap suds, the soap bar still in his hand.

“Would you rather?” Hannibal says, offering the bar to Will, knowing that the only areas left to wash are more intimate.

Will closes Hannibal’s fingers around the soap, “No, I’d rather you.”

Will puts his head on Hannibal’s shoulder as Hannibal slides his hand down Will’s chest and abdomen to bury his fingers in Will’s pubic hair. He strokes Will’s penis, still flaccid; it is more intimate than clinical but with no intentions beyond getting cleaned. Hannibal moves to Will’s testicles, holding his scrotum and washing the heavy sack with careful attention.

Will’s nose rubs against Hannibal’s neck below his ear, the scent gland soothing him even amongst the scent of the shower. Will is holding onto Hannibal at the nape of his neck. Hannibal slips his soapy hand from the small of Will’s back between his cheeks. He is more thorough than is necessary for cleanliness, but the soft panting of Will in his ear is distracting.

Will rinses off and steps out to get a towel, watching Hannibal as he conditions, soaps, and rinses himself head to toe. He does all of it in a minute, eager to return to Will. They skip their pajamas and lie nude on the bed beside one another. On their sides, their hands skim along the other’s skin, running fingers through damp hair and cupping solid jawlines.

“Never again,” Hannibal promises, kissing Will’s palm, his hand holding Will’s wrist.

“Just be honest with me,” Will asks.

Hannibal nods against Will’s hand. “Yes. For you.”

“For us,” Will corrects and pulls Hannibal into a kiss.

Their kiss is slow and forgiving. Will cards his fingers through Hannibal’s hair while Hannibal takes a handful of curls, not pulling but holding onto him as if he were afraid to let go. At some point, they are pressing against each other. Will grabs Hannibal’s ass, which earns him a bite to the shoulder, enough to sting but doesn’t break the skin.

“Fuck,” Will moans in response.

“One…second,” Hannibal says as he awkwardly reaches for his nightstand, trying not to break contact. It is the least put-together Will has ever seen Hannibal; it makes him smile, knowing that *he* is more important than the façade, than the person suit.

Hannibal returns with lube and, settling himself again, takes them both in his lubed hand. Slowly stroking their erections.

“Oh, Han,” says Will before kissing Hannibal again.

Soon, their moans pull them from their kisses, the two of them breathing in one another, mouthing at jaws, necks, and shoulders in between their groans. The scent of Will’s slick fills Hannibal’s nostrils, driving his arousal even further.

“I’m close,” Will moans, licking Hannibal’s ear.

“Come with me, good boy,” Hannibal moans. They cum together over Hannibal’s hand and the duvet. They lay together, kissing, until they start to chill.

Will gets up to brush his teeth before bed while Hannibal strips the duvet off the bed and gets a throw blanket from the linen closet to toss over them.

Hannibal brushes his teeth while Will takes his evening dose of pills. Will hands the syringes to Hannibal, who gently injects them into him. He kisses Hannibal on the cheek for his effort. Hannibal grabs him by the wrist before he can step away and kisses him on the lips before letting him go.

Under the sheet and the blanket that night, Will is once again the little spoon.

Tuesday (or Can't we have nice things?)

Chapter Summary

Hannibal gets a text message. The Bentley's computer voice reads:

"Saw your new purchase. We'd love to try him out if you've got a price in mind. Got a bit mouthy but I corrected him. Shouldn't be a scar."
Would you like to reply?

Hannibal's vision goes red, and the car smells like burnt garlic.

~*~

The neighbor is rude.
The boys watch a movie and eat pizza.

Chapter Notes

How's everyone doing? I took a break and ate some food. Self-care, people, is all I ask of you.

TW: Brief description of minor physical assault

Hannibal will have to murder someone.

Will hears Hannibal brushing his teeth before he opens his eyes. The light is coming through the bathroom window, bleeding into the bedroom.

“Good morning, Will,” Hannibal calls after spitting and rinsing the toothpaste from his mouth.

“Good morning, Han,” Will says in passing, still naked, heading to pee.

“Anything I can recommend to help you pass the day?” Hannibal asks, who is watching Will pee from his spot by the sink.

“Anything I can help you with?” Will says, watching Hannibal watching him. Hannibal chuckles. “I was going to help myself to a book if that’s okay,” Will states.

“They’re yours as soon as you say yes. But you’re welcome to borrow them in the meantime.” Hannibal smirks.

When Will washes his hands, he sees his watch on the vanity beside the sink. The engraving “WL” stands out in the lighting. With his hands dry, he picks up the watch and takes a half-step into Hannibal’s space.

“Help me,” he asks.

“Of course,” Hannibal promises, slipping the silver band around Will’s wrist and latching it in place. Will leans forward to kiss Hannibal.

“Thank you,” Will replies. Hannibal looks at Will with an emotional hunger: longing, adoration, and lust. Will can smell toasted coconut; the overwhelming scent of Hannibal’s emotions is so strong it makes Will hard.

“You can’t look at me like that and expect to make it to work on time,” Will chastises, though he only partially means it. He brushes nonexistent lint from the chest of Hannibal’s jacket.

“You are correct, unfortunately. Care to join me for breakfast?” Hannibal concedes.

“Sure, just let me get dressed.”

“Of course.” Hannibal sits on the bed, watching Will dress.

“You’ve got a voyeur thing going on this morning,” Will comments, noticing Hannibal watching him again.

“Just for you,” Hannibal explains. Will knows it’s true; it makes him quite happy.

Will has a pair of his slacks and an undershirt on. Hannibal sees his eyes look at his side of the closet. “I recommend the maroon one; the dark color contrasts beautifully with your bright eyes to make them stand out,” Hannibal offers. So, Will wears Hannibal’s maroon dress shirt.

Their breakfast is simple: a poached egg, buttered sourdough toast, and leftover fruit salad. Will pours them each a cup of coffee.

Hannibal helps Will with his injections and confirms that if Will continues to improve, he can stop treatment after completing two weeks, ten days from today.

Will puts their breakfast dishes in the dishwasher. Hannibal notices that the key, wallet, and phone are gone from the counter and spots the outline of at least one in Will’s pocket

“I should be home around six,” Hannibal says, placing his lunch into his briefcase.

“Be safe,” Will says, kissing him out the door.

After eating, Hannibal was rinsing his lunch container when his phone vibrated in his pocket.

Will

Any concerns with me laying in the sun on the back patio?

No concerns

Except if you are naked

I'll keep the good bits covered. Promise.

Good. See that you do.

I will see you at 6

***

Hannibal is halfway home when another text comes in. The Bentley's computer voice reads:

Message from Holland, Frank. It reads, "Saw your new purchase. We'd love to try him out if you've got a price in mind. Got a bit mouthy but I corrected him. Shouldn't be a scar." *Would you like to reply*?

Hannibal's vision goes red, and the car smells like burnt garlic. After asking twice, the Bentley takes the hint and stops asking if he'd like to reply. Hannibal has a death grip on the steering wheel for the remainder of the drive.

Hannibal doesn't want to wait for the garage door to open and close; he parks in the driveway and runs up the front steps to get into the house.

"Will!" Hannibal yells as he is still shutting the door.

"In the front room," he calls back, though not as loud.

Hannibal finds him in the same spot as the day before, except with his feet on the cushion, his knees under his chin, and his arms wrapped around his legs. He's created a protective cocoon around himself. He is wearing a pair of sweats that Hannibal has for cold-weather running. His cheek is a vivid pink, and his bottom lip is split.

Hannibal sits across from him again to make sure Will can see his face so he would understand that any anger he smells isn't for Will.

"Are you okay?" Hannibal hesitantly reaches toward Will, only wanting to comfort and protect his omega.

"Yes," he replies, not meeting his eyes. Will is reverting to his subservient omega persona, avoiding eye contact, speaking as little as possible, minimizing himself, and hiding his gift from people who would call it a disorder.

When Hannibal rests his hand on Will's knee, the omega startles. He finally meets Hannibal's gaze.

"I'm sorry," he says. Anguish and shame roll off him in waves; his scent is bitter.

Hannibal moves to sit next to Will, pulling him towards him. Trying to soothe the younger man, he has Will half-pressed to his side and half in his lap. They both prefer the contact.

"You did nothing wrong. You have nothing to apologize for. Just tell me what he did."

"Just ignore it. I'll stay inside. I'll be good." Will is practically vibrating; he is nervous and upset.

Hannibal squeezes him closer and begins rubbing Will's back. Hannibal purrs, trying to calm the omega further. Will grabs Hannibal's lapel and rubs his face against his chest. The smooth fabric of his waistcoat and shirt warms under his motions, and Hannibal's scent envelopes him in a cocoon of safety.

Hannibal feels useless at the moment. He is ready to murder his neighbor but Will needs him.

"My good boy," Hannibal tries, hoping to soothe Will. "You're alright. You're such a sweet boy. I'm so lucky."
Will whimpers, trying to bury his face further.

"I've got you, no one else. You're mine."

"I'm yours," Will confirms. "Your good boy," he promises.

Hannibal encourages Will to climb fully into his lap since it will be less awkward for all their limbs. Will is eager to oblige and eliminate the small distance between them. Hannibal is able to wrap his arms around Will completely. They sit like that for a while, holding each other, gently caressing the other, supporting and caring for one another.

About an hour later, Will is lying reclined, feet on the ottoman, between Hannibal's legs, with his head on his stomach. Hannibal has removed his jacket and thrown it over the back of the sofa. Hannibal is playing with Will's hair. Will's eyes are closed, and he is enjoying the gentle touch.

"I think I can tell you now if you think you can hear it," Will says, knowing that Hannibal would likely react strongly.

"Okay," he replies, putting one hand on Will's chest protectively while stroking Will's head and hair.

"I put on shorts, mid-thigh before you ask," Will interjects into his own story.

"I would not ask. 'What were you wearing?' is just victim blaming; please continue," Hannibal prompts. Will pats the hand on his chest in approval.

"I was on the lounge chair, no shirt, in the shorts, on the back patio. I heard him whistle, and I ignored it. It's not a construction site and it's the twenty-first century. Ignoring him was apparently the wrong decision.

“He called over the fence. Asked if I had time to sunbathe between sucking your dick, maybe I could suck his instead.”

Will feels Hannibal tense with anger, so he grabs his hand. Hannibal calms slightly at Will’s touch, and Will continues.

“I said that I don’t think that’s the type of relationship you’re looking for from me, so I would be unavailable. Which was an answer he didn’t appreciate. He said he knew you were a reasonable guy and that I could not speak for you. Then he came into the yard. I stood up and went to head back into the house. He grabbed my arm and turned me towards him. He slapped me. Slapped me! A grown man. He didn’t even have the balls to punch me!”

“That’s what you’re upset about,” Hannibal inquires, following Will’s trail of humor and sarcasm rather than one with anger.

“It’s what I’m choosing to be upset about now. What do we do now?”

“First, you let me take care of that lip, then I make dinner.”

“Can I order pizza instead?” Will asks, his voice leaning into whining territory.

“This evening has already been dramatic. Why are you trying to wound me further?” Hannibal is pinching the bridge of his nose.

“Because I’ve never gotten to order pizza, and they smell great.” Will knows what he is doing, but it isn’t less accurate because it’s manipulative.

“No chain restaurants or 1-800 numbers, please,” Hannibal tells Will, who hops up to get his phone from the table. “And no pineapple.”

Will had searched the internet for a local place earlier in the day, daydreaming about pizza. He found one in Baltimore that has won an absurd list of awards. He orders a plain cheese pizza and their signature pizza, which has a dramatic list of ingredients.

Hannibal disinfects the cut and dabs some antibiotic ointment on Will’s lip. He also makes sure Will has his medication.

Will gets homemade beers from the refrigerator and turns to find that Hannibal has also gone upstairs to change into sweats. Will is in grey, and Hannibal is in black, which did something to reduce the appearance of a cult, but it was still in the air. Hannibal tells his voice assistant it is “movie time.” The living room lights dim, and a large television rises from what Will had assumed was a credenza. He hands Will the remote while they wait for dinner to arrive.

Despite being October, Will decides against watching horror movies, so he settles on ‘The Princess Bride.’ After the pizza is delivered, they settle on the sofa, wrapped in one another. Will eats six slices of pizza, and surprisingly, Hannibal eats three, though he describes the dough as “uninspired” and insists he will make them a better pizza next week. Hannibal is very tactile throughout the movie, touching and kissing Will almost constantly. Will

recognizes it as his alpha's way of ensuring Will is safe. Will also knows without it as a distraction, Hannibal would be reacting with blood.

When the movie ends, Will turns off the TV but stays propped against Hannibal.

"So, what's your plan for him?"

"For Frank?" Hannibal is confirming.

"Is that his name?"

"He didn't even introduce himself," Hannibal comments as if his rudeness is the surprise after the assault. Will refrains from laughing. "I have something in mind, but I must plan further."

"But you'll tell me?"

"I will tell you," Hannibal confirms.

When preparing for bed, Hannibal frowns at the bruise that is forming on Will's arm, where he had been grabbed. Knowing the end is coming to Frank, Will doesn't feel bad.

Wednesday (naughty Wednesday)

Chapter Summary

> “Good morning, Will,” Hannibal greets before rolling onto his back.
>
> “When do you need to leave?” Will asks.
>
> “It is still early. I do not need to rush,” Hannibal confirms.
>
> “Indulge me?” Will asks with a conspiratorial smirk.
>
> “You, gladly.” Hannibal is eager to see what he is indulging.
>
> ~*~
>
> Hannibal and Will make some plans, have some dinner, and enjoy their alone time.

Chapter Notes

> Smut, scheming, fluff, smut

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hannibal wakes up half on top of Will, who is face up and sound asleep. Hannibal wonders at his partner. The only night Will had suffered through the sweating and night terrors he warned of was the night he slept alone. Although with little effort, Hannibal tries not to credit himself for Will’s improved sleep habits but is proud of himself nonetheless.

“Where’s the canary?” Will asks sleepily, eying the predatory cat on his stomach that is too happy with himself.

“Good morning, Will,” Hannibal greets before rolling onto his back.

“When do you need to leave?” Will asks.

“It is still early. I do not need to rush,” Hannibal confirms.

“Indulge me?” Will asks with a conspiratorial smirk.

“You, gladly.” Hannibal is eager to see what he is indulging.

Will shimmies down the bed, taking Hannibal's pajama bottoms with him. On his way back up, he kissed the inside of Hannibal's right knee, then the inside of his left thigh. Then, with the flat of his tongue, he licks at Hannibal's ball sack. Hannibal sucks in the air through his teeth.

"I want to hear you, Han," Will looks up at Hannibal's body. Hannibal is looking at Will, watching his strong jawline, rough stubble, and tongue licking up his stiff shaft.

"Oh, Will," he moans, threading his fingers through Will's curls.

Will begins to bob up and down Hannibal's cock, his tongue rubbing and massaging with each stroke.

"My sweet, perfect boy," Hannibal praises. One hand is still in Will's hair; the other is fisting the bedsheet, trying to remain still for Will's exquisite attention.

Will doubles his efforts, taking longer strokes down Hannibal's shaft, taking in more of him, providing suction with his movements; his hand wraps firmly around the base while the alpha's knot slowly swells.

"*Mano meilė,*" Hannibal says. Will is impressed that Hannibal forgot English and continues worshipping Hannibal's dick with his mouth.

When Will's other hand starts massaging the alpha's testicles, Hannibal tips over the edge, coming into Will's mouth and shouting his name.

Will kisses Hannibal's thigh. Hannibal climbs out of bed quickly and goes to the bathroom, avoiding Will's touches. His movements are sharp, and the smell of burnt garlic hits Will's nose. The alpha throws his top on the floor and climbs into the shower.

"Anger was not the reaction I was expecting," Will announces, standing at the entrance to the shower, his and Hannibal's pajamas in hand.

Hannibal is facing away from Will when he starts speaking; he is just loud enough to be heard over the rushing water.

"When I told you I would be honest with you, I thought that it would be reciprocated."

Will is confused, and it is hard for him to judge without Hannibal looking him in the eyes.

"What are you accusing me of lying about, Hannibal?"

Hannibal turns off the water and faces Will; his expression is filled with anger and disappointment.

"What, Hannibal?"

"You told me Bedelia was the only alpha with whom you had an intimate relationship."

"Correct."

“So what the hell was that!” Hannibal is yelling. Will realized then that seeing this man angry is the last thing some people ever see.

Will keeps his tone calm, hoping to de-escalate. “What was oral sex? The blowjob?” Hannibal is vibrating with anger. He looks at Will again, and then it clicks.

“You’re the only man I have been with, Hannibal. Look at me, I’m a shit liar. I am telling you, it’s only you. It’s only ever been you. It…it will only ever be you.”

Hannibal sees; he shakes his head. “I have never felt like such a large imbecile in my life.”

“So you’re saying it was good,” Will presses himself against the wet, naked man in front of him.

“Don’t distract me; I still heard you curse.”

“Ugg!” Will groans in frustration before getting a quick shower.

Will comes to join Hannibal for breakfast, wearing one of Hannibal’s cashmere sweaters. Hannibal looks pleased to see him in it.

“You like the color?” Will asks.

“I like you in things I have bought, even if they are the wrong size. I like to provide for you. And that you have my scent on you.”

Will buries his head against Hannibal’s neck, nuzzling his throat. “I do like making you happy.”

“You’re such a good boy,” Hannibal confirms. Will presses his hips against Hannibal, his growing erection becoming more prominent. “You were so good to me this morning,” Hannibal punctuates by grabbing a handful of Will’s ass. Will moans wantonly at the contact.

Will opens his mouth to say something but hesitates. Then he supplies, “When are you home tonight?”

“Six tonight.”

“I think I’ll skip sunbathing today.” He chuckles.

Hannibal steps away to get Will and his plates, leading to the island.

“I will not wait to take care of our *neighborly* problem, which means it must be carefully orchestrated. Stay out of his sight until I figure out how to maneuver this. I will need to respond to his text, so that will be the first pawn I need to move.”

“I hope I’m not a pawn in all this,” Will says, feeling the chess analogy appropriate to his helplessness and how used he felt.

“No, Will. You are the king. I have told you I will protect you at all costs.”

“Are you the queen in this game?”

“I suppose so.”

Will kisses Hannibal out the door and then heads to the study. He finds the book he is looking for immediately but needs to go to Hannibal's home office to get some supplies.

Han

Can I borrow some paper and a pen from the office?

There are blank notepads in the desk.

The bottom drawer on the left. Help yourself.

Thx 😘

Hannibal doesn't typically approve of adults using emojis in messages, but he doesn't particularly mind in this case. Will is quickly becoming the exception to his rules. Since he has his phone handy and his first appointment won't start for 15 minutes, he decides to text Frank.

Frank Holland

I agree. I don't think there will be any

long-term physical damage.

Grt

Let me know what a nite might cost $

Let me think it over

"Everything okay?" Will answers his phone.

"Yes, I just wanted to let you know what the first play was," Hannibal explains and reads him the text exchange. Then, he tells Will what their strategy might be. Will insists he helps, and Hannibal reluctantly agrees. They will have to wait until after the dinner party, but they can make it happen next week.

With that plan in motion, they spent their days thinking about better things. Will is working on learning Italian, eager to surprise Hannibal, to make him smile again. Hannibal is reliving Will's indulgence and has to reign himself in throughout the day to make sure none of his patients gets the wrong idea should his scent give him away.

Later in the afternoon, Will texts to find out if there is anything he can do to prepare for dinner. Hannibal smiles and concedes, then lets him know which bottle of wine he can open to let breathe. He asks him to peel a handful of potatoes and take two steaks out to come to

room temperature. With the dinner party in two days, Hannibal doesn't want to go overboard with anything in the meantime.

Hannibal comes home to the smell of potato starch in the air and four large russet potatoes in a bowl on the island. Hannibal finds Will in the office, sitting in a chair in the corner, holding one book with a notepad on his crossed legs and his phone balancing on his knee.

"They are still looking for a unified field theory if you find yourself bored tomorrow," Hannibal offers from the doorway before going over to Will.

The room looks much like Hannibal's office for patients, with the same color palate and aesthetics. The floor is carpeted in a plush, beige and white colored, herringbone-patterned berber. The chair, however, was not the leather of the office but an upholstered chair in a warm caramel color with cushioned arms. The omega prefers the softness of this chair to other's stiff leather. Will looks up when Hannibal approaches and smiles, gladly accepting the offered kiss.

"I'm sure that was a clever joke. I just don't know what it means," Will says apologetically.

"Nothing to worry over. Can I help you up?"

"Yes, please," Will accepts.

Hannibal collects the notepad, so Will has two hands to grab the Italian book from the study and his phone. He stands up and wobbles. Hannibal quickly hooks his hand under Will's arm to support him.

"I think I sat in that spot for too long. My feet are numb."

Hannibal collects the book from Will and puts it and the notepad on the desk. "You *can* use the desk," Hannibal offers before sweeping Will into his arms and carrying him to the kitchen.

"I can walk, you know," Will insists.

"All evidence to the contrary," Hannibal smirks. He sets Will down on a stool at the island. "I would still appreciate your help if you're willing."

"Of course," Will smiles at the alpha's invitation; the gesture means a lot.

Will cuts the potatoes for pomme frites while Hannibal takes out a small sauté pan and a cast iron skillet, setting them on burners to warm.

Hannibal quickly chops an onion, adds it to the sauté pan with oil, and adds crushed garlic. Will soaks the frites in water, then collects the blender for Hannibal from the pantry.

"I still don't understand why you have to make your own ketchup," Will inquires, watching Hannibal add the contents of the sauté pan into the blender with a large jar of tomatoes that Hannibal had preserved himself.

“When you taste it, you will understand.” He blends them until smooth, adding apple cider vinegar and brown sugar. Will notes that, thankfully, those were at least store-bought.

Hannibal replaced the sauté pan on the stove and poured a hearty amount of oil into it to cook the fries. Will places the steaks into the cast iron pan with a large pad of butter and a sprig of rosemary. The meat sizzles as soon as it touches the pan. Will sets the table while Hannibal makes fries and monitors the steaks. Medium rare would take no time at all.

Will sets the dining room table, pours their wine at the seats, and places ramekins of homemade ketchup in front of the place settings. Hannibal soon emerges with steak frites for them to enjoy, and they do.
They discuss the rest of the week over their meal. They need to coordinate with deliveries expected over the next two days and meals to prepare.

“Thank you for your help,” Hannibal admits.

“I don’t know how much help I’ll be,” Will says honestly.

“With you here, I don’t have to reschedule my Friday appointments.”

“Two weeks in a row,” Will acknowledges. “You canceled because of me last week.”

“Please do not make yourself sound like a chore, Will. You are the best thing that has ever happened to me. Please do not forget that. I will have to buy you more things if you do.” Hannibal teases.

“Don’t, please,” Will implores. Hannibal hums in a noncommittal sort of way.

They clear the table and retire to the study. Will starts a fire while Hannibal disappears to the bar in the butler’s pantry. Will is surveying his work when Hannibal offers a hand to his feet, followed by a crystal tumbler with two fingers of whiskey.

“God, that is smooth,” he comments after his first sip.

“An 18-year Glenmorangie single-malt,” Hannibal informs him.

“You lost me after 18-years. But it’s good nonetheless.” Will takes Hannibal’s hand, leading him to the sofa, where he puts Hannibal in the corner seat, leg along the back, while Will lays against his chest, legs on the couch. He wiggles against Hannibal to get more comfortable.

“I knew giving you whiskey was a good idea,” Hannibal says before sipping his own.

In response, Will runs his unoccupied hand up and down Hannibal’s thigh.

“Finish your drink. I want to take you upstairs,” Hannibal directs.

Will tilts his head back against Hannibal’s chest to steal a kiss. Hannibal’s unoccupied hand slides down to cup Will through his slacks. Will begins to nuzzle Hannibal’s neck.

“I find myself wanting to indulge my good boy,” Hannibal promises.

“D…fu…Han,” he whimpers.

Hannibal finishes his glass in one last swig, and Will follows his lead; the two then get to their feet. Hannibal looks at Will mischievously.

“I can walk there by myself,” Will says, reading through Hannibal’s mischief.

“Only if I let you,” Hannibal says, with the look of a playful predator.

Will bolts out of the study, through the kitchen and the dining room, before Hannibal has him in the air in the foyer. Will manages to stay upright and wraps his legs around Hannibal’s waist. He is kissing and mouthing at Hannibal’s neck while they make their way up the stairs to their bedroom.

Hannibal shed his jacket when cooking, leaving him with one less layer to peel out of. Will has worn another shirt of Hannibal’s with French cuffs, requiring a brief pause to their explorations. Once they successfully disrobe, they climb into bed.

Hannibal is on top of Will; their bodies are pressed together from chest to feet. Will has resumed laving at Hannibal’s neck with his mouth, tongue, and teeth, his hips undulating against Hannibal’s, which are pressing him into the bed. Hannibal’s breath is coming out as soft pants in Will’s ear. The scent of their arousal fills the room, egging them on.

“Will,” Hannibal starts but is distracted by Will’s teeth on his earlobe. “Will, I would like to use my fingers.” He is having difficulty navigating the chasm between clinical and intimate discussion. “I want to…”

Will kisses him to save him. “Please,” Will begs.

“My good boy,” Hannibal kisses him again. “Knees up,” he asks. “If you want me to stop, just tell me. This should feel good; you will tell me if it does not.”

Hannibal wants to kneel back and watch himself slowly work Will open, but Will needs to see Hannibal and needs eye contact, so he stays lying on Will, shifting his weight to his left arm while he touches Will’s hole, already leaking slick.

“You beautiful boy, Will,” Hannibal purrs as he slowly circles the tight ring of muscles with his middle finger. Hannibal’s long fingers help in many endeavors - they make him a graceful surgeon, a talented musician, and even a skillful chef. Will's moans at his touch are otherworldly; he would give up any of his other endeavors to make Will respond like this. Hannibal continues his slow circles but applies gentle pressure. Will breathes out a lusty keen. Hannibal has been hard, but Will’s pornographic moans fill the bedroom and have him leaking precum onto Will and his stomach.

“Such a good boy,” Hannibal extolls. “Do you want a little more?”

Will’s moans turned into a whine, “Yes.”

“Just breathe for me, sweet thing.”

The tip of his finger breaches the ring of muscle.

“Nngh,” Will groans, pressing his forehead against Hannibal’s shoulder.

“Shhh, shhh, sh. Just breathe and try to relax,” Hannibal says, pressing outward against Will’s clenching muscles. “You are so tight, baby; just try to relax.”

After a minute of gentle pressure and breathing, Will’s groans returned to moans. Will tries to rock his hips but is thwarted by Hannibal’s hips.

“Do you want more, baby?”

Will whines a yes. And so Hannibal slides his middle finger past the second knuckle buried in him. Will lets out a cry of pleasure and tries to buck his hips again. “Move, please.”

“Anything for my good boy, Will,” Hannibal whispers in his ear. Hannibal starts to rock, his hips and hand moving synchronized, fucking Will with his finger. Hannibal begins to curl his finger to find Will’s prostate, which is the work of only seconds.

“Oh, fuck!” Will shouts, stars flashing in his periphery. Hannibal continues to fuck him, occasionally brushing his prostate. He wants Will to last longer; he wants Will to want more. Hannibal is bathing in the obscene sounds and delicious scent that his partner is making.

Eventually, Will’s moans have a tinge of anxiety, of need. Hannibal doesn’t stop his thrusting.

“Tell me what you want. What does my boy need?”

“More, I need more, please.”

“Such a naughty boy,” He pulls out his finger but continues to rut against him, moaning Will’s name.

“Please, Han.”

Hannibal kisses Will; their mouths and tongues search for more of each other. Hannibal slips his index and middle finger into Will, sliding in. Feeling the hot walls of Will clench around the intrusion. Will moans into Hannibal’s mouth.

Hannibal begins to stroke Will’s prostate with each thrust, and Will’s moans are getting more frantic. He is getting closer. Hannibal presses his thumb against Will’s perineum.

“Such a wanton thing. Whose good boy are you, Will?” Hannibal is still thrusting; he won’t be far behind Will.

“I’m yours. Hannibal!” He cries, toppling over the edge, coming on his stomach and Hannibal’s. “I’m yours, Han. Yours.” He cries, riding out the waves of pleasure, his body gripping tightly on the alpha’s fingers, spasming around the digits.

Hannibal leans back, pulling his slick-coated fingers from Will, kneeling between Will’s legs, and begins to stroke himself.

He sees the pink muscle of Will's puckered hole, still open from his efforts. Hannibal strokes faster.

"I am yours, Will. Yours," Hannibal groans. "Will!" He yells before he climaxed, his cum arching to land on Will's open hole, his dick, and stomach, mixing with Will's.

Hannibal stays kneeling but isn't moving, his eyes closed.

"Fuck that was hot," Will praises. Hannibal smirks at his achievement.

"Language," he reminds Will.

Will huffs and Hannibal looks at Will; they smile.

Chapter End Notes

Mano meilė = my love

Thursday Conversations

Chapter Summary

> “You look good enough to eat,” Hannibal warns playfully.
>
> “Doctor Lecter, I hope all your conversations don’t go like this,” Will scolds playfully, hanging his coat on the hook, giving Hannibal a better look at his ass.
>
> Will is suddenly in Hannibal’s arms; he hadn’t heard him move.
>
> ~*~
>
> Hannibal heads to work while Will takes care of some things at home before his appointment. The appointment goes well.

Chapter Notes

> Teasing, deliveries, and the boys enjoy Will's visit to the office (all the smut). Will is Daddy's good little omega. ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

> Will wakes up as the little spoon; both men clad only in pajama bottoms.
>
> “Good Morning, Will,” Hannibal purrs in his ear.
>
> “Good morning indeed,” Will confirms, wiggling his butt against Hannibal’s morning erection.
>
> “Don’t tempt me. I have an early client this morning and a full day; I wish I could,” Hannibal complains. Will knows he wants to stay with him, so he doesn’t push it.
>
> “And you’ve got that headcase at the end of the day,” Will reminds him.
>
> “Don’t be rude,” Hannibal pinches Will’s butt before removing himself from the bed. “That’s my future fiancé you’re disparaging.”
>
> “Mmm,” Will hums his approval. Hannibal is pleased to see the positive reaction his words elicited from Will.
> Hannibal gets a quick shower while Will slowly extracts himself from bed and helps himself to his pills.

Hannibal emerges from the shower and, still naked, stands behind Will. He begins running his index fingers under the waistband of Will's pajama bottoms. He inches them slightly lower, and Hannibal rubs the exposed hip bones. Will leans his head back in appreciation of the delicate touch. And then Hannibal injects him, one in each cheek. Will sighs in exasperation. At least he didn't stab him.

"Is that how you get the drop on people," Will asks, stripping and climbing into the shower.

"No, that technique is only for you," Hannibal confirms.

"That's good… I think," Will surmises.

When Will gets to the kitchen, Hannibal has Will's breakfast and coffee on the table while he packs his lunch into his briefcase.

"I realized we have an odd number for dinner tomorrow, and I wanted to invite Jack Crawford from the FBI. I've consulted on cases for him before. He's quite entertaining."

"And not rude, I'd imagine."

"Quite the opposite. Shall I extend an invitation?""

"Yes, enemies closer and whatnot."

"Exactly," Hannibal confirms. "I'm sorry I can't stay and join you for breakfast."

"It's okay," Will assures him.

"The start of your wardrobe will arrive before noon. Hang up everything right away, please. It has all been dry-cleaned. The car will be here at 3:30 to get you. The reservation is for Mr. Lecter," Hannibal informs him.

"Okay," Will is glad for the warning. When drivers pick up unbonded omegas, they are either weird or handsy.

"Oh, let me give you something to tip the driver," Hannibal stops and pulls out a money clip. It is sleek and silver, with the only adornment the engraved HL. Hannibal starts to pull out a twenty from the middle of the stack, pauses, counts out a few more, and then hands the large stack of bills to Will. "Only tip him twenty, but please hang onto the rest. I'd feel better with you having that."

Rather than resist and make Hannibal more uncomfortable, he chooses acceptance and flirtation. He slips the money into his pocket and steps up to Hannibal, wrapping a hand around his neck and placing the other on his chest.

"A new wardrobe and cash. Do you want to be labeled my sugar daddy?" He kisses Hannibal's chin.

"My *good boy* deserves to be spoiled by his *daddy*," Hannibal confirms, his breath hot against Will's ear.

Will purrs in approval, his body vibrating in appreciation.

"I'll see you at four," Hannibal confirms, stepping away and leaving through the garage.

Will is very distracted as he eats his breakfast.

At 11:00, the doorbell rings. Will opens the door to Signore Gallo's assistant.

"Ciao. Prego entra," Will tries.

He figures he is close when she smiles and replies, "Grazie."

"Io studio Italiano," Will explains.

"Molto bene," she replies. "Il mio nome è Maria."

"Piacere, Maria."

She leaves one large garment bag with Will and returns to her car, where she pulls three more from the trunk lying flat on the floorboard. Will temporarily places them in the hall closet before accepting two large paper shopping bags filled with items.

"Arrivederci," Maria says after the handoff.

"Grazie mille," Will says, waving briefly before closing the door. It will take Will a few trips to get everything into their closet.

Will

I'm not hanging up socks & underwear etc

Fair enough

Thank you

They did excellent work

I'm glad you approve

See you soon

The drive to Hannibal's office is remarkable in that it is unremarkable. Will has never had a driver treat him with such respect before. It's surreal. Will stands in the waiting room while Hannibal finishes in his office, trying to minimize creasing his clothes. Will has his overcoat draped over his arm.

"Will, please come in," Hannibal says over Will's shoulder. He holds the door open for him and gestures for him to enter. Hannibal scents him as he walks past. The omega smells of the two of them. Hannibal's inner alpha purred with approval. Mine, it claimed.

Typically, Hannibal would go to his seat and encourage Will to sit opposite him, but he is distracted. Will is wearing his new heathered grey suit and a black dress shirt. Knowing he'd butcher any attempt at a knot, Will skips the tie, leaves the top button undone, and opts for a black pocket square. Will's new black leather shoes and belt are perfect and creaseless.

"You look good enough to eat," Hannibal warns playfully.

"Doctor Lecter, I hope all your *conversations* don't go like this," Will scolds playfully, hanging his coat on the hook, giving Hannibal a better look at his ass.

Will is suddenly in Hannibal's arms; he hadn't heard him move.

"Only you," Hannibal tells him urgently. "Yours," Hannibal confirms his ownership by the omega. Will kisses him slowly in confirmation. Hannibal tries to accelerate their kiss, and Will pulls back slowly.

"Should we sit?" Will indicates the leather chairs at the center of the room. He watches the emotions shifting behind Hannibal's expression, from frustration to confusion to acceptance.

Hannibal collects himself as they walk to the chairs. He adjusts his jacket and cuffs, carefully maneuvering his trousers as he sits to minimize folds. Will unbuttons the single-breasted jacket as he sits, planting his feet in front of him.

"How has the past week treated you?" Hannibal asks.

Will ponders the question. "Overall, quite well."

"Does that surprise you?"

"I've had 16 previous alpha owners. I'd never describe any of those instances as 'quite well.' So, yes, it's surprising."

Hannibal accepts the qualification. He can't fault him for it.

"Do you still feel like you're owned, Will?"

Will pauses. Hannibal tenses microscopically, but Will can tell. Will knows he can't lie to cover, so he continues, honestly.

"Sometimes. The neighbor thing, obviously. Or when I feel like I don't have true autonomy."

Hannibal nods. "I understand my way of expressing protection of you causes you to feel like you are not an independent person. While I will continue to work and correct my behavior, I ask that you continue to communicate with me and let me know when I cause you to feel like this."

Will nods, "I will."

Hannibal pauses before asking his question.

“Will, do you think you would enjoy the work of a park ranger?”

Will finds the question random but answers, “Yes, most likely.”

“How about a florist? Could you enjoy working with flowers, alone rather than alongside people?”

Will is wondering about the odd questions. “Yes, probably. Hannibal, what are these questions?”

Hannibal breathes deeply before answering. “I worry that your pure empathy has allowed me to corrupt you. That what I am will infect you.”

“And that infection would be in the form of becoming a park ranger or florist?”
Hannibal stands and walks towards his desk, stopping in front of of it, facing away from Will.

“Do you think, without my influence, you would still want to kill Frank Holland?”

“Don’t you have to report me if I have intentions of hurting someone?”

“There is confidentiality…” Hannibal starts.

“For patients, not for conversations with an unbonded omega, even yours.” Will finishes; not upset, just being practical. “Yes,” Will whispers.

Hannibal nods his head and turns to Will, satisfied by his response.

“You know they cannot force spouses to testify against one another,” Hannibal offers.

“How romantic,” Will jokes, though his tone was warm. Hannibal holds Will, watching his face, trying to uncover the mysteries in that beautiful brain. Will’s eyes dilate a fraction, but enough for Hannibal to see. Hannibal rubs Will’s back.

“What are you thinking about?” Hannibal asks.

Will looks into Hannibal’s eyes. He gestures with his head towards Hannibal’s desk chair. “I was thinking about how I want to ride your cock in that chair and call you *daddy*.”

Hannibal’s nostrils flare and pupils dilate; he can smell the slick already trailing down Will’s thighs. Will steps back to take off his jacket and toe off his shoes. Hannibal is frozen stiff. The alpha in him wants to devour, but the man in him fights to keep Will safe, a vicious tiger locked in a cage. He watches as Will undoes his cuffs and removes his shirt, carefully placing it over the jacket on the back of the leather chair. Will is not wearing an undershirt. He pulls off his socks, dropping them into his shoes. He starts to undo his belt when Hannibal unfreezes.

“Let me,” he asks, not quite begging. Will nods. Hannibal takes two strides and is in front of Will; without breaking their gaze, Hannibal undoes Will’s belt, careful not to crease it, undoing the button on his slacks, and carefully slides Will’s pants and boxers down in one motion. Will can smell the alpha’s increasing arousal.

“Dio mio,” which is the closest Hannibal gets to saying a prayer. He takes a half step back to look at the beauty that is Will. “Kad ir kaip ilgai mane turėtum, kad ir kaip mane imtum, aš esu tavo.”

Will understands the Italian, not the Lithuanian, but judging from the look he is giving Will, Hannibal is gone, head over heels for Will. There is no logic to be found, just a pure, driven alpha need to be together and consume the other until they are one. Will was getting hard from Hannibal’s desirous gaze.

“Sit?” Will asks, prompting Hannibal back into action. Hannibal ditches his jacket, places it next to Will’s, and then adds his tie. When he goes to get rid of his waistcoat, Will asks him to keep it on. Hannibal nods, his throat suddenly dry.

Will directs him towards the chair, and before he sits, Will pulls the alpha’s pants and boxers down, springing Hannibal’s erection free. Will makes a moaning sound of approval before getting Hannibal to sit.
Will straddles him, knees tucking next to Hannibal’s thighs in the chair. Will’s dick brushes against Hannibal’s, causing the older man to suck air through his teeth at the hint of pleasure. Will whispers into Hannibal’s ear.

“I have a secret. Don’t be mad,” He tells Hannibal. Hannibal is palming Will’s thighs and ass, finding it very hard to form words. “I got myself ready for you.”

Hannibal slides his fingers towards Will’s entrance to find it soft, puckered, and swimming in slick.

“My cunning boy,” Hannibal praises. “Nice and slow,” he tells Will, who is lowering himself on Hannibal while Hannibal holds his dick still. He wanted to see Will take his cock so nicely, but that would have to wait for another time. Will is whimpering, wanting more in him while also hurting so nicely from Hannibal’s girth.

“Go slow, Will. Don’t hurt yourself.”

“But I want you, Daddy,” Will cries with need.

Hannibal kisses Will, distracting him. Will has gotten the head in, so Hannibal is doing short, partial strokes and lifting his hips to help Will acclimate. Soon, his hole is ready for more, and Will starts moving. Hannibal lets him take the lead, watching his boy ride him.

“You take my cock so good, baby.”

“Oh, Daddy!”

“My sweet boy, Will”

“Mmmm, Daddy.”

Will is bouncing furiously, like a rabbit; Hannibal’s dick is hitting his prostate on each bounce. Hannibal isn’t sure how he kept at it.

“Ride me, my omega.”

“Fuck me, Daddy. Alpha, fuck me!” Will’s pace is frantic. Hannibal knows he is on the edge.

“Are you going to cum from Daddy’s cock? Are you going to be Daddy's good boy?”

“Yes, Daddy! Yes! Alpha!” Will yells, his cum streaking Hannibal’s waistcoat.

Will’s clenching muscles pull Hannibal closer to completion. Hannibal grabs Will’s hips and snaps himself into Will violently, three more thrusts before his knot locks him inside of the tight, wet heat of the omega, and he cums deep inside of Will, moaning his name.

Will collapses forward onto Hannibal, who wraps his arms around Will.

“You are amazing, Will,” Hannibal confirms, petting soft, now-sweaty curls and kissing the top of the omega’s head. Will is holding onto Hannibal’s waistcoat, stroking the material with his thumbs.

“I think I might have ruined your vest,” Will admits, not sounding sorry.

They hold each other, locked together, their scents mingling—their shared space building an emotional bond that will only be complete with future bonding bites. After around 20 minutes, the alpha’s knot begins to deflate.

“Wait,” Hannibal tells Will, who is trying to dismount. Hannibal grabs his handkerchief from his pants pocket, however awkwardly, and slides it between Will’s cheeks, and Will slowly stands, unsheathing Hannibal’s dick. Hannibal goes to the bottom drawer of his desk, where there are wet wipes, paper towels, and a lot more cleaning supplies than a psychiatrist who wasn’t a serial killer would typically need.

Will gently wipes his slick from Hannibal’s dick and scrotum. Hannibal stands, redressing his lower half before lifting Will and carefully placing him on his desk. He pushes gently on Will’s chest, encouraging him to lay back. Will anticipates Hannibal wiping down the omega. He did not anticipate Hannibal licking him. With his tongue, Hannibal is taking in the combination of Will’s slick and his cum, pressing beads of the thick fluid back into Will’s puckered hole. Will moans wantonly.

“I want it to stay inside you,” Hannibal explains between licks. “I want to smell myself leaking out of you. Is that okay?” Hannibal is suddenly worried that Will would see it as possessive rather than kinky.

“Yes, please. Yes, Daddy.” Will is squirming with how turned on he was.

“Such a good boy for Daddy,” Hannibal confirms, licking a few times more. Hannibal steps away to get Will’s clothes and helps him dress. Limiting the cum spillage until he stood to leave. Hannibal helps Will into his coat, grabbing his own, and they leave the patient exit to go home. Hannibal gets Will settled in the Bentley. He can smell his cum dripping out of Will and loves every moment of it.

“Do you want the seat warmer?” Hannibal asks, wary of Will’s sore backside.

“No, your car smells enough like sex now. Let’s not bake it into the interior,” Will laughs.

After a short dinner and a long shower, Will asks to be the big spoon, too sore to risk additional attention.

Chapter End Notes

This line is the inspiration for this entire story: “I was thinking about how I want to ride your cock in that chair and call you daddy.”

Ciao. Prego entra = Hello. Please come in
Grazie = Thank you
Io studio Italiano = I am learning Italian
Molto bene = Very good
Il mio nome è Maria = My name is Maria
Piacere = Nice to meet you
Arrivederci = Goodbye
Grazie mille = Thank you very much
Dio mio = My God
Kad ir kaip ilgai mane turėtum, kad ir kaip mane imtum, aš esu tavo. = No matter how long you have me, no matter how you take me, I'm yours.

Before the Dinner Party (Friday Morning)

Chapter Summary

Will wraps bacon around three dozen stuffed dates and slides them into the oven. “That seems like too many for eight people.”

“I have found people lose count of the appropriate number when something is wrapped in bacon.”

“Does anyone ever show up late?”

“It has happened, though no one has gotten the chance to repeat such a performance.”

~*~

Our boys prepare for the dinner party.

Chapter Notes

Short chapter: I had to break the day into parts; otherwise, the day would have been a massive chapter.

Domestic fluff and croissants.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Friday is an early morning. Hannibal is up and out of bed and directs the produce staff where to place their items in the kitchen before Will even wakes up. Will chuckles, listening to him coordinate the deliveries as he gets dressed for the day. Will would have pointed for everything to go on the island.

When he gets to the kitchen, he discovers he would have been right; Hannibal eventually has them put everything there.

Hannibal smiles when he spots Will and comes over to kiss him. “Good morning, Will.”

“Good morning, Han. What are my directions?”

Hannibal explains where the extra tables and chairs being delivered should go and that they are being paid enough; Will shouldn’t lift a finger other than to point. The catering staff is who he usually works with; they wouldn’t require directions; they just needed to be let in.

Will is about to ask about the bakery delivery when the doorbell rings. There were two trays of fresh-baked items and a small paper bag.

“Here,” Hannibal says, handing the bag to Will. “Our breakfast.” Will is shocked he’d order a meal, especially after Will convinced him to get pizza. It is a chocolate croissant and a honey croissant.

“Due cornetto, grazie.”

Hannibal’s smile in response is so warm that Will can’t believe how lucky he is.

Hannibal takes a bite of the honey, finds it too sweet, and takes half the chocolate croissant on his way out the door. He is nervously repeating directions he’s already given.

“You will be back in three hours, and I will call if something happens,” Will confirms.

Hannibal is back in two hours and forty-five minutes.

The table and chairs are perfect. Will is wiping one down when Hannibal walks in.

“You are cleaning?” Hannibal is nervous. “What happened?” Hannibal is clearly worried that something has happened that made Will regress.

“I spilled my coffee on it,” Will counters. He watches Hannibal sniff, and when the notes of coffee hit his nose, he has the courtesy to look contrite.

Hannibal begins making preparations for the meat and accepts Will’s help. Will steps out briefly to let the catering staff into the house. They are shocked when Hannibal lets the omega assist with the meat when they, as professionals, were never allowed to. There is whispering and staring. Hannibal pretends he doesn’t hear them, though Will cannot remain as unaffected. To his credit, to help Will, he speaks to him, generously sprinkling in terms of endearment, using sweetheart, dear, and a few mylimasis. The jealousy seems to shift from professional to personal when they realize they are together, but it makes Will smile. Hannibal belongs to this omega and wants to let everyone know he is taken, by Will.

Will watches Hannibal working and remembers this was for eight people, including the pair of them.

“What’s the largest dinner party you’ve held?”

“I had a winter holiday party a few years back. I invited 36; several brought unannounced plus-ones, so I served 45.”

“I guess they were not invited back.”

“They were not,” Hannibal confirms.

Will presents Hannibal with a small salad of dark greens, dried cranberries, walnuts, crumbled feta, and balsamic vinaigrette.

“You are taking care of me,” Hannibal comments, stopping to eat his salad with Will, leaning back against the kitchen island. The alpha purrs as he eats his meal alongside his omega.

“I figured we should eat something light since we have your amazing cooking to look forward to.”
Hannibal could not have fathomed that he would one day feel like this, that his dark soul could be overcome with care and love for someone. He puts his salad on the counter and turns to Will. Will mirrors him physically.

“I love you, Will. I did not think I could, genuinely. I thought it was something I would never find. But here you are.”

And now Will is crying. He kissed Hannibal, letting all the emotion and confusion melt away so that it was just them. Hannibal knows that Will can’t say it yet. Will carries two burdens: the legal status that strips him of autonomy and the psychological, where he struggles to find his own emotions when being inundated with others. Hannibal wants to hear him say it, but he wants it to be genuine. Will has to be sure first. Hannibal is comfortable waiting.

“Han,” Will whispers. Hannibal kisses Will’s hairline.

Caterers scatter when Hannibal looks up and sees them staring.

“Like cockroaches,” Will jokes. Hannibal grunts his concurrence.

They finish their salads together; the staff reconvenes to continue preparations.

Will wraps bacon around three dozen stuffed dates and slides them into the oven. “That seems like too many for eight people.”

“I have found people lose count of the appropriate number when something is wrapped in bacon.” He chuckles as he puts the last knot into the string around a roast he prepared.

Hannibal gives the head of the catering crew his last set of directions before stepping away. He pulls Will close to his side and escorts him upstairs. Everyone watches the pair of them retreat together.

Hannibal showers and then shaves, and Will trims and then showers. Hannibal helps put styling cream in Will's hair, pulling the sides back but leaving the top to keep it soft. Once they are clean and groomed, Hannibal has their wardrobes selected and ready to go. Hannibal’s suit is a double-breasted, three-piece, dark brown plaid with blue in the tartan. His shirt is white, and his double Windsor knotted tie is the same shade of blue as the plaid and pocket square.

Will’s suit is the same dark blue, two-piece, single-breasted, with a white shirt, a single Windsor-knotted dark brown tie, and a brown tartan pocket square. They went together without matching.

“Two sides of the same coin,” Will offers, inspecting Hannibal, more like ogling. Hannibal purrs in agreement and at the attention.

Will checks his watch. It is ten minutes until the hour. “Does anyone ever show up late?”

“It has happened, though no one has gotten the chance to repeat such a performance.”

“I didn’t doubt it. I’m surprised no one has arrived yet.”

“As am I,” Hannibal comments, leading to the hallway to head back downstairs.

The doorbell rings when they reach the foyer, and Hannibal smiles. Will smiles because he smiles. It has the makings of a delightful evening.

Chapter End Notes

Due cornetto, grazie = two croissants, thank you

Author's Advice: The next chapter packs a lot of drama and food. If it's close to bedtime, get some sleep. I'll be here when you return.

The Dinner Party

Chapter Summary

> “Have you seen his party trick,” Sutcliffe says to Alana between bites of ‘pork.’ He elbows Jack, who is carefully putting together his next bite on his fork. “He can read people, it’s crazy.” Jack looks unimpressed and mildly annoyed.
>
> ~*~
>
> At their dinner party, the food is great but the company is hit or miss.

Chapter Notes

> The menu travels around the world, and there's a wine to accompany each course.
>
> A lot of people are dicks to Will in this one.
>
> Be nice to yourself, maybe some other people, and drink your water, P&TY

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will takes a step away from the door so that Hannibal can welcome their guests and make introductions. The first are, he guesses, Hannibal’s society friends from the opera.

“Mr. & Mrs. Raymond and MaryJo Komeda, may I introduce my partner Will.” Hannibal collects their coats and passes them to the waitstaff standing by with hangers.

“So lovely to meet you, Will.” Mrs. Komeda steps forward, air-kissing Will’s cheeks. She is a short, elderly, white, alpha lady with sparkling eyes that speak to Will of mischief.

“Likewise, Mrs. Komeda,” Will offers. “Mr. Komeda,” Will extends his hand, and the two men shake. Mr. Komeda is a larger, elderly, Asian beta man who looks like an introvert whose extroverted wife drug him to a party.

“Will, tell me how you convinced Hannibal to throw together one of his dinners.”

“I wanted to introduce my future fiancé to the world,” Hannibal chimes in.

“Future?” She looks back and forth between Will and Hannibal, disbelieving.

“I am waiting for Will to say yes,” Hannibal confirms to the woman.

“Did you propose properly, Hannibal? I bet he didn’t,” She says, the last added on with a conspiratorial air to Will. She pulls him to the far end of the foyer while Mr. Komeda heads into the living room to help himself to the open bar.

Will grabs two glasses of wine from a passing waiter and gives one to an appreciative Mrs. Komeda.

“Did he get down on one knee? Did he have a ring?” Mrs. Komeda enjoys this too much, ensuring she is loud enough for Will’s alpha to overhear. Will is enjoying her positive attitude.

“No to both, unfortunately. But he did give me this lovely watch,” Will shows her.

“It is very nice but too practical,” Hannibal winks at Will when she uses the word ‘practical’ to describe the luxury watch.

Hannibal opens the door to a young, white, beta woman with strawberry blonde hair dressed in a flatteringly cut evening gown. Will realizes she must be Dr. Bloom. Will can instantly tell she has feelings for Hannibal, like how she casually touches him and exchanges pleasantries.

“You need a ring,” Mrs. Komeda continues. She stays in the foyer to ensure Hannibal hears every bit of advice.

“Watches are practical. Rings give the opportunity to flaunt. They say that someone cares enough about me to throw away a ridiculous amount of money on this.” She waggles her fingers as a case study.
Will and Mrs. Komeda see Alana talking to Hannibal.

“I’d love to meet him later,” Alana comments.

“I’ll introduce you now,” He moves to direct her towards Will without touching her.

“He’s here,” she hisses.

“Dr. Alana Bloom, I’d like to introduce you to my partner Will.”

“Your partner?” She practically yells.

Now Hannibal touches her; he grabs her elbow and quickly moves her to the kitchen. They are talking closely. She gesticulates wildly while Hannibal speaks with an icy stoicism.

“Mrs. Komeda, I should explain,” Will starts, staring at the conversation in the kitchen. He is interrupted. She walks with him into the living room, where Mr. Komeda is nursing a gin and tonic at the other end of the room.

“Will, I always pay attention when I’m introduced to someone new. Do you know why?” He knows it is rhetorical, so he shrugs to encourage her to continue. “I learn how they want to be called. It wouldn’t do to meet a Richard and then later call him a Dick.” She chuckles at her blue joke. “But I also pay attention to what others close to them call them. Hannibal

introduced you as his partner. His future fiancé. That's all that matters." She doesn't say *to me*. She says it like it is final. This little old woman decides all that matters is how Hannibal sees him and how he is appreciated. She bends the world to her whims.

"Thank you," he says affectionately to this little old woman.

"Raymond, what are we drinking," she yells, breaking away from Will.

The doorbell rings. Will is closest. He looks towards the kitchen; Hannibal is walking towards him and gives him a nod to go ahead and open the door.

"Dr. Chilton, Dr. Sutcliffe, come in," Will says, reigning in his disgust, apprehension, and instinct to flee. Then Hannibal is right behind him, left hand on his shoulder, his alpha instincts to protect his omega. Hannibal extends his right hand forward to shake. The two guests don't offer to shake Will's hand. They tried to give him their coats, which Hannibal quickly intercepts and deflects to the staffer.

"I typically waited until the end to break out Will's party tricks here. Or somewhere more private," Chilton says brazenly. Hannibal expects this behavior and doesn't gratify it with a response.

"Will and I are happy to invite you into our home; please help yourselves to cocktails." As if on cue, wait staff circles the living room with wine, champagne, and hors d'oeuvres. Will watches in real-time as the goat cheese-stuffed, bacon-wrapped dates are devoured alongside canapés and assorted charcuterie.

One minute before the hour, there is a knock at the door, right on time. A large, black, alpha man steps in and promptly shakes Hannibal's hand.

"Thank you again for the invitation, Dr. Lecter." Hannibal takes his coat and fedora.

"Call me Hannibal, please. Jack Crawford, let me introduce you to my partner, Will."

"Pleasure to meet you," Jack shakes his hand. "Will…?"

"Just Will," he informs him. Jack nods, understanding.

"Let me introduce you to the rest of my guests."

Hannibal walks them into the room, and the guests swarm. Hannibal pulls Will close. Will doesn't feel overwhelmed pressed against Hannibal. Will engages when spoken to and laughs warmly when appropriate. All the while, Hannibal's hand rubs his hip, back, arm, neck, hair… Hannibal can't stop touching him, and Will doesn't want him to. It is all very PG, but it makes Will feel safe. It shows that he is wanted. More than once during the discussion, he sees the Chilton-Sutcliffes look flabbergasted. Even more often, he sees Alana, who never introduced herself, look at him angrily and with pure jealousy.

At the top of the next hour, the head of the waitstaff nods to Hannibal, who then masterfully quiets the room and informs them that dinner is served.

Hannibal has place cards down at each seat. He does this sometimes to kick the bee hive or poke the bear; this time, it is the opposite: keeping Will safe. Will prefers to sit next to Hannibal, but society expects Hannibal and his partner to sit at the heads of the table. Along the fireplace side, next to Hannibal, is Dr. Chilton, then Dr. Sutcliffe, and finally, next to Will, is Jack Crawford. On the herb wall side, beside Hannibal, is Alana, with Mr. Komeda in the center, and next to Will is Mrs. Komeda.

The first dish is brought out, and Hannibal stands to explain the course.

“Roasted fig with a pancetta floret with a balsamic maple reduction. It’s paired with a Cabernet Sauvignon from British Columbia.”

“A nod to the maple,” Will replies quietly.

“Precisely,” Hannibal is pleased Will noticed so quickly. “Please enjoy.” He sits, and everyone begins to eat.

“Will, I’m surprised you’re allowed to eat at the adults’ table,” Chitlon chides as he finishes his glass of wine after inhaling his appetizer.

“Frederick, I’m surprised you’re rude enough to say something so crass,” Mrs. Komeda quickly intercepts.
Will offers to top up her glass as a thank you. She accepts. Hannibal seems to be ignoring Chilton’s empty glass.

“A very lovely start,” Jack offers. Hannibal nods his appreciation.

“BC is lovely. Have you been, Will?” Alana chimes in, knowing Will can’t have been and that an unbonded Omega isn’t allowed to leave the country to find their freedom.

The waitstaff comes to clear plates and wine glasses.

“Canadian winters can be brutal. I much prefer Maryland weather,” Jack says to no one in particular.

“I agree; not sure my knees agree with winter anymore,” Mr. Komeda replies.

Will watches as Alana puts her hand on Hannibal’s wrist. Hannibal quickly removes his arm from her reach and stands, announcing their second course.

“Our second course tonight is carnitas con mole, atop yellow rice and dusted with Cotija cheese. It’s paired with a beautiful Santo Domingo Nebbiolo from Valle de la Grulla.”

“Because the dish is Mexican,” Alana chimes in, eager to find praise but earning none. Will smirks at Hannibal, who winks back at him.

“Please enjoy,” Hannibal says to the room.

“Have you seen his party trick,” Sutcliffe says to Alana between bites of “pork.” He elbows Jack, who is carefully putting together his next bite on his fork. “He can read people, it’s

crazy.” Jack looks unimpressed and mildly annoyed.

“Dr. Sutcliffe,” Hannibal says, his tone between condescending and threatening. “There are three board-certified psychiatrists here; let’s not throw around pejorative and inaccurate labels for your entertainment.” Hannibal makes it clear he is not entertained.

“What do you mean, read people?” Alana is happy to throw Will under the bus. She wants his seat, as it were.

“Will, let’s talk about dates. I think you two should get married in the Spring,” Mrs. Komeda tells him.

“I agree. My wife and I married in the spring. Helps save on flowers.” Jack chuckles, “though I doubt you two need to worry about pinching pennies.”

“Very practical,” Mr. Komeda adds.

Alana’s face turns red.

The waitstaff clears the table and quickly returns with the next course.

“Next, we have my take on a traditional Italian porchetta stuffed with fennel, onion, and garlic, served alongside fingerling potatoes and green beans. This is paired with a Vernaccia di San Gimignano.” Hannibal pauses to see if Alana dares to interrupt. She does not. “Please enjoy.”

“Han, this is delicious,” Will tells him when he first stops eating halfway through his serving.

“Thank you, dear,” Hannibal is beyond pleased.

“Han,” Alana injects.

Will drops his fork loudly into his plate.

“No,” Hannibal tells her. He scolds her like a puppy peeing on the carpet.

“Hannibal,” she restarts, trying to regain her footing. “It’s delicious.”

“Thank you,” he replies curtly, the corners of his eyes creased.

“So, we’re set for Spring,” Mrs. Komeda continues with Will’s end of the table, though she is sure to include Hannibal since she is planning his wedding out loud. “Do you think you’ll have it at the house or find a venue?”

“The Peabody Library is lovely; my niece got married there last year.” Jack offers.

“Very nice place,” Mr. Komeda confirms.

“Oh, it is lovely,” Mrs. Komeda preens. “Hannibal, you won’t mind if Will and I go on a little tour next week, do you?”

Hannibal is torn between wanting to tour wedding venues with his almost fiancé, and letting him be autonomous.

“Perhaps Hannibal can join us; it *would* also be his wedding. Then he can treat us to lunch afterward.” Will supplies. Hannibal smiles, and MaryJo claps her approval.

“You’re hardly likely to get a date on such short notice, especially for him,” Chilton tilts his head towards Will. Alana snorts.

“I think you would get more flies with honey,” Hannibal supplies.

“You think I should be nice to your little omega boy toy?” Chilton is clearly in his cups.

“I think dining with one of the library patrons, well, two, makes getting a date easier. Don’t you agree, Raymond? MaryJo?” Hannibal quips.

Ray raises his glass to Hannibal.

The waitstaff clears and returns with their last course.

“For our last taste of the evening, I’ve combined the Italian with Japanese, making sanguinaccio dolce mochi. This is paired with the red Domaine Saggo from Nagano. Please enjoy.”

Each guest is given three dough-wrapped blood chocolate ice cream treats. Mr. Komeda is enjoying his ice cream with great affection, which reminds Will of childhood treats that are long gone.

After dessert is cleared, coffee and tea are served at the table.

“So, what is the party trick?” Alana is not letting go.

“He reads people. He can profile them in a minute. It’s creepy how accurate.” Chilton offers, with Sutcliffe nodding along.

“If Lecter ends up selling him, you should get him. He’d be great for the FBI,” Sutcliffe says to Jack.

Hannibal is winding up to correct Sutcliffe when a deafening BANG hits the table. Jack had slammed a hammer fist onto the table.

“I am a child of ancestors who were trafficked and sold as enslaved people in this country. I would never *own* someone,” Jack’s tone is quiet and deadly serious.

“I don’t think an officer of the government is allowed to go around disparaging the perfectly legal practice of omega ownership in this country,” Chilton scolds.

“He didn’t,” Mr. Komeda comments.

“What do you know? I know what I heard,” Chilton chirps back.

“I practiced law in this country for 50 years before I retired. Mr. Crawford stated his personal belief and stance on the matter and didn’t utter a single disparaging word. But if his comment about slavery felt like an attack, maybe you should check yourself,” Mr. Komeda comments. Jack gives the elderly man a nod of appreciation.
Hannibal stands and walks towards Will, who stands to join him.

“Let us walk you out,” he offers their guests.

“How can I reach you about a tour?” MaryJo asks as Ray helps her into her coat. Will waits for her to retrieve her phone and gives her his number. The Sutcliffe-Chiltons are beside themselves. They leave without a word.
Alana attempts to kiss Hannibal on the cheek in the foyer, but he gracefully avoids that incident. Will offers Alana her coat in a way that suggests he would help her get into it; rather than accept, she angrily grabs her coat and leaves without saying another word.

“I’m sorry about the commotion,” Hannibal says to Jack, extending the man’s coat and hat.

“Well, it ended in a knockout, unanimous decision. Besides, your cooking was phenomenal; thank you, Hannibal,” they shake. “Will,” they shake. Hannibal closes the door behind their guests.

“And then there were two,” Will concludes. “Bed?”

With the catering staff having finished cleaning up and exiting, Hannibal pulls Will close to whisper in his ear.

“Let Daddy suck your cock?”

“Yes, please.”

Chapter End Notes

Roasted fig with a pancetta floret with a balsamic maple reduction:
https://kneadtocook.com/maple-balsamic-sage-roasted-figs/

Carnitas con mole, atop yellow rice and dusted with Cotija cheese:
https://cakesandcoriander.com/oaxacan-chocolate-mole-carnitas-enchiladas/
(but not as enchiladas)

Italian porchetta stuffed with fennel, onion, and garlic:
https://www.thespruceeats.com/porchetta-italian-pork-roast-2313626

Sanguinaccio dolce mochi (in two parts): https://www.emikodavies.com/blood-chocolate-sanguinaccio/
https://tastesbetterfromscratch.com/mochi-ice-cream/

After the Dinner Party

Chapter Summary

Carefully, Hannibal maneuvers them to lay down, Will prone on his stomach, his head to the side; Hannibal covers the omega and buries his face in Will's curls. He purrs.

~*~

Hannibal and Will go to bed after the dinner party.

Chapter Notes

It's a short chapter but 100% Smut - It's just a quickie!

And this time, they both say ILY

Once they lock their bedroom door, Will is out of his clothes in record time, and Hannibal is shortly after; his waistcoat gives Will a time advantage, or so he argues.

"Sit," Hannibal says softly. Will stays standing and looks put out. "What?" Hannibal is confused.

"I want to taste you too. I was so good today, wasn't I?" Will is rubbing against Hannibal, nuzzling his neck like a good boy. "Lay down on your side," Will asks.

Hannibal complies. Will inverts and lays down beside him to sixty-nine.

"My smart boy," Hannibal says before wrapping his lips around Will's erection.

"Oh, Daddy," Will moans before taking him into his mouth.

They lay like that, thrusting into each other's mouths. They moan around the hot, thick intrusions in their mouths. Long shafts and deep thrusts create the occasional gagging noise, but they continue to worship one another. Soft suckling and sucking noises are accompanied by deep passionate moans from both Hannibal and Will. Will's slick leaks copiously onto the duvet. Will begins to massage Hannibal's balls while Hannibal strokes Will's hole, gently rubbing against it.

Will cums first, Hannibal swallowing each pulse, the taste tangy from the wine. Will takes Hannibal deep several more times before he, too, cums. Will swallows it all, moaning around

Hannibal's cock.

They decide on a shower together, which results in Will being pinned against the shower wall for ten minutes while Hannibal licks and sucks his asshole. Will is a quivering mess but starting to rebound from his release; his cock is already half-hard again.

When they get out of the shower, Hannibal makes sure Will takes his medication before heading back to bed, where Hannibal resumes fucking Will with his tongue, which is language only Will would use.
Hannibal pulls the omega back towards him and gets Will on his hands and knees. Hannibal knows Will wants penetration, but Will's pink, puckering hole enthralls Hannibal. He bends over again to press his tongue into Will again, over and over.

"Please, Daddy," Will finally begs.

"Oh my sweet omega, do you need more?" Hannibal asks.

"Yes, please."

Hannibal slides his fingers between Will's cheeks, gathering the omega's slick on his fingers. The alpha then wraps his slick fingers around his cock and coats himself in a few long, lazy strokes.

"Daddy will take care of you, Will."

Will whimpers.

Hannibal quickly enters Will with his finger and, before long, adds a second. Will begins to moan when the alpha starts scissoring Will open. Hannibal is transfixed, his eyes never leaving Will's beautiful hole. He leans over to lick his way around the ring of muscle while his fingers continue to move and stretch his boy.
Will starts to rock backward at Hannibal's intruding hand. Hannibal stops him with a hand on Will's hip.

"Shhh, Daddy will take care of you," Hannibal promises while he lines the head of his dick against Will's slick-coated asshole.

Will moans as Hannibal presses into him. Hannibal watches as his shaft slides further into Will's beautiful body.

"Oh, Will, you're gorgeous," he says sincerely. "So tight."

"Only you," Will promises. "You're mine." Will moans. "I'm yours."

"Will," Hannibal pants before he starts to set a rhythm. Hannibal starts slow. But Will's moans drove Hannibal faster.

"Fuck me good, Daddy," Will demands.

“Oh yes, Will. Yes. My good boy, my omega,” Hannibal is saying, thrusting with total abandon. The sound of his hips slapping against Will’s luscious ass fills the room. The smell of their sex takes over Hannibal’s senses; there is nowhere else he wants to be, nowhere he can imagine. Will is everything.

Will is a mess. Hannibal is driving more pleasure from him than he thought possible. The alpha’s words of praise overwhelmed him. He is crying tears of joy and wants nothing more in his life. This is his beginning and end. He manages to get off his hands; Hannibal is there to support him, holding him upright against his chest, his thrusts never-ending. Will turns his head to kiss Hannibal, who gladly accepts. They are both close; their gasps and thrusts are becoming erratic.

“I love you, Hannibal. Alpha,” he says before he cums, untouched, over their duvet.

“I love you, Will,” Hannibal says before kissing Will. He thrusts a few more times before cumming in Will, his knot holding them together, connecting them. Carefully, Hannibal maneuvers them to lay down, Will prone on his stomach, his head to the side; Hannibal covers the omega and buries his face in Will’s curls. He purrs.

After it’s safe to separate, Hannibal starts their second shower of the evening while Will strips the duvet from the bed. He grabs the same blanket from the linen closet they used the last time they ruined the duvet.

They are more focused this time and stick to showering—well, showering and kissing on the mouth and neck.

Back in bed, Hannibal is the little spoon due to Will’s sensitive backside. Will is lazily kissing Hannibal’s neck as they are falling asleep.

“I meant it, you know. I love you.”

“I know you did, Will. And I love you,” Hannibal’s heart is happy.

Shopping Trip

Chapter Summary

"Are you worried about how you will be treated or how I will be treated?"

“Honestly, you. I’ve been less than a person my adult life, my whole life, to be honest; I’m not worried about me. But someone like me, *something* like me, can ruin you. You think I’m great and the perfect partner at home. But when society starts to judge you, look down on you…”

~*~

Hannibal takes Will shopping. Will shares his doubts and concerns. And they get crab cakes.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is emotionally draining! If you are drained, spent, or low on spoons, wait to read this chapter.

If it's your thing, get some chocolate or have an orgasm - you'll need the endorphins.

It's okay to take a break. I'll be here when you're ready again.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hannibal wakes up when he hears the vacuum cleaner running downstairs. The alarm clock that he never typically set or needs reads 7:30. He is glad the housekeeper is early but still disappointed he hadn't heard her enter the house sooner. He knows his very active night with Will is the reason, but he still scolds himself. Then, Will's arms squeeze tighter around Hannibal, who is walking up to the same symphony.

"Good morning, Will."

"Morning. Do you always have the cleaners come this time after a dinner party?" Will asks, bemoaning their circumstances.

“Usually, I am by myself and go to bed at a normal hour," Hannibal informs him.

"You're blaming me?" Will asks humorously.

"I'm giving you credit. Twice in one night. For both of us," Hannibal praises, kissing Will's arms, still holding him in place. "Let's get around." Hannibal climbs out of bed.

"Mmm. For what?" Will asks curiously.

"We're going shopping."

Will covers his head with the sheet. "People are exhausting, and they treat me weird."

"I'll be with you the whole time," Hannibal says, walking to Will's side of the bed. He leans down to whisper in the general area of Will's ears. "Daddy wants to spoil his omega today." Hannibal is purring.

"Mmmm," Will hums, wiggling under the sheet with pleasure, pulling his head free. "Yes, Daddy."

"Good boy."

Will is still in good spirits over breakfast, but they start to wane as they get closer to their departure time. Hannibal opens the car door to let Will into the Bentley, kissing Will before closing the door.

Hannibal takes them on 695, heading to the north of the city. As he drives, Hannibal is torn between not wanting to let Will spiral emotionally and wanting to let Will do things on his own terms.

“You can talk to me if you want. I have been told I am an excellent listener,” Hannibal offers. “And I will comment only if you want me to,” he adds for good measure. There are a few moments of silence before Will speaks.

“I am concerned about what will happen when you’re seen with me.”
Hannibal waits.

“Oh, you can comment,” Will adds. Hannibal smiles.

“Your choice of wording is interesting and, I am sure, deliberate. Are you worried about how you will be treated or how I will be treated?”

Will closes his eyes to limit the amount of stimuli. Hannibal sees this and turns off the radio, however quiet the classical music has been playing. Will smiles at his gesture.

“Honestly, you. I’ve been less than a person my adult life, my whole life, to be honest; I’m not worried about me. But someone like me, *something* like me, can ruin you. You think I’m great and the perfect partner at home. But when society starts to judge you, look down on you…” tears start to fall from Will’s eyes. Hannibal can see from the corner of his eye and smell the salt. He reaches towards Will, but with his eyes closed, Will stays to himself, his hands on his thighs, his eyes shut tight.

“You’ll reconsider. I’m interesting now. But you’ll start to think, maybe I’m not worth the trouble. You’d keep me out of obligation and never sell me. But you couldn’t throw away

your life for me. Not in the cold light of day." Without a bond, there is nothing to tie them, nothing permanent. Without exchanging bites, everything else is words. Will is shivering now, and he puts his arms around himself to try to soothe himself, leaning against the door, caging himself in for protection, away from Hannibal.

"Will," Hannibal starts.

"No, don't. Please, think about it before we go anywhere. Just…please."

Hannibal drives on, taking the correct exit, signaling, changing lanes, and turning down the right streets, but he processes none of it; his head is swimming. He pulls into a spot in front of the store and turns off the car.

And they sit.

The tiger inside the alpha wants to claw at the world, tear out throats, and destroy all the wrongs perpetrated against Will. The alpha feels incapable, for what feels like the first time since he lost his sister, that he can't provide, can't protect.

"May I say something?" Hannibal asks, looking forward, not daring to look at Will, not daring to see his heartache made manifest.

"Yes," Will's voice is barely a whisper; his voice is rough and raw with emotion.
Hannibal takes the scalpel from his coat pocket and puts it on the dashboard, making noise with it to get Will to look at it. He leaves it there.

"I would cut out my heart for you now if you need proof of me, of my love for you. Or you can do it if you would rather."

Will begins to sob.

"I would cut my arms off so that you could have them to hold you, to protect you. I would cut myself open and give you the blood from my veins to sustain you. I would give you my tongue but only ask that my last words with it be to tell you 'I love you' for there is no greater truth worth saying.

"I have known hunger and homelessness and lost those who loved me and whom I thought I loved. But right now, there is no world for me that does not end and begin with you. So, please, Will, tell me where to cut because without you, I will never be whole."

Hannibal picks up the scalpel again and holds it in his hand, his index finger along the back of the blade, ready to cut.

Will is still crying. His knees are pulled up, his feet are on the seat, and his head is resting on his knees.

"I'm…broken. I'm disposable, replaceable…you bought a lemon," Will's voice is wrecked with emotion.
Hannibal suddenly strikes out and stabs the dashboard of his car with the scalpel; the impact

is so violent the car alarm goes off. Hannibal angrily retrieves his keys so that he can silence the alarm. Will goes silent along with the car.

“I have asked you before not to disparage my future fiancé,” Hannibal’s voice is raw but quiet.

“You can’t mean it. You can’t mean . . . you’re a fucking count. You’re the most eligible bachelor in Baltimore, if not the eastern seaboard. Why would you risk all that on someone who is less than a person? Someone with a disorder no one can stand, no one can be close to.

“You need a partner of equals. Someone who you can take to the opera. Someone who can match your intellect. Someone who you can travel the world with.

“Han, I’m not worth any of that.”

Hannibal rubs his eyes because he is out of fresh stabbing implements, apart from the one lodged in the dashboard; plus, he doesn’t want to set off the car alarm again.

“Will, do you like stories? Music? Foreign languages?” Will nods to all three. “Then it’s safe to assume you might enjoy going to the opera.

“Apart from references to things denied to you in the past, have you at all felt you were left out or intellectually inferior?” Will shakes his head.

“And when you say yes, I will bond with you. We will let Mrs. Komeda have her way; I will marry you this Spring or whichever Spring you choose, in whatever library, house, or gods forbid, coffee shop you choose. And then I will take you anywhere and everywhere you want to go.”

“You are the other side to my coin, Will. And if you refuse me, I will retrieve that scalpel so that you can carve whatever you need from me. For I am worth nothing that is not in your service.”

Will leans over to hug Hannibal. When the side hug, fettered by seatbelts, proves insufficient, Will unbuckles and climbs over the center console, bumping his head along the way. He sits in Hannibal’s lap, straddling him. Hannibal pulls him close, rubbing his fingers through his curls, finally feeling calmer now that Will is in his arms.

“I am sure it will take a long time for you to let go of thoughts like those, but I will not give up on you, on us, because of the small-minded fodder of society.”

Will relaxes in Hannibal’s arms, nuzzling Hannibal’s neck and scenting his alpha.

“You meant every word,” Will confirms. “All of it.”

“Yes,” Hannibal says, kissing Will’s head, burying his face in Will’s curls, breathing him in, and scenting the omega in return. They sit crammed into the seat, breathing in the other, faces buried in their happy place. Will is starting to kiss and mouth Hannibal’s jawline when he pauses.

“Where are we?”

“The jewelers,” Hannibal says, “Mrs. Komeda made some excellent points last night.” Hannibal kisses Will’s head again.

“You really think now is the time to do this?”

“I think it’s the perfect time. It would be best if you had something to show the world how much I think of you. And your daddy needs to spoil you.”

“Han,” Will whines, pressing into Hannibal further.

Hannibal tilts his face so that he can look at Will.

“What was that baby? I didn’t hear you?”

“Daddy,” he says softly, kissing Hannibal’s jaw.

“Mmmm,” Hannibal hums in approval. Opening his car door, he stands, lifting Will with him, who makes a loud, startled noise at the sudden relocation.

“Did you just yelp, Will?”

“Uh, I think I might have. Can you put me down now?”

Hannibal puts Will on his feet and then kisses him on the cheek.

Hannibal holds the door open for Will, allowing him to explore the store independently. Hannibal worries that lurking too close would be too much pressure. He wanders in the opposite direction but keeps Will in his sights.

“What can I help you find today?” the young, blonde, beta saleswoman asks Will.

“Just looking,” Will says, looking into the cases between them.

“I’m Sarah. Let me know if you see anything you like,” she says, playing with her hair. Will makes a nonspecific grunt of acknowledgment and continues looking.

Hannibal speaks to the salesman at the other end of the store, Mark, making arrangements to view men’s rings that would make appropriate engagement rings. Hannibal is unsurprised to find that stores don’t already cater to this, despite the year on the calendar.

Hannibal watches as the young saleswoman tries again to get Will’s attention; she wants so badly to flirt with an attractive young man with no wedding ring. It doesn’t hurt that he is well-dressed and can afford to shop in this store. Hannibal would almost have to laugh if he weren’t slightly annoyed. Betas can’t pick up on scents, so she doesn’t know Will is an omega. But Will continues to ignore her attempts, regardless, though he clearly knows what she is up to.

The salesman helping Hannibal whispers something to Sarah, who excuses herself.
She reemerges from the back, following Mark. The salesman is holding two trays of their highest-priced men's rings, in platinum and gold, with and without diamonds and other precious stones. Sarah carries a tray with a chilled bottle of champagne and several champagne flutes.

"Here we are, Dr. Lecter," Mark says without flourish. The jewelry speaks for itself; the rings are immaculate, and Hannibal has immediately identified three that he wants Will to try but does not want to sway Will's decision.

"Congratulations," Sarah tells him, pouring him a glass. "Your fiancé is a lucky man."

"Yes, he is," Will says, stepping next to Hannibal to steal his champagne.

To say that Sarah is crestfallen would be an understatement.

"Is that a yes?" Hannibal asked, eyebrow raised.

"What was it, MaryJo said? You have to 'do it properly' with 'a ring.'"

"Well, after today, I'll be halfway there." Hannibal then turns, looking at Sarah, who has neglected to pour a second glass. Mark has to step in and take over. "Thank you," he says, accepting a second flute, which he gets to drink himself. "Any that spark your interest?"

Will is in awe. They all seem like too much. His heart starts racing, and Hannibal is watching him; the salespeople are watching him.

Hannibal watches Will, and once he realizes that he is headed towards spiraling again, he moves, walking behind Will and boxing him in. The alpha is protecting his omega. He stands directly behind Will, his arms on the counter on either side of him. Will leans back into his solid, warm presence.

"I've got you," Hannibal whispers to Will. "I'm not going anywhere."

"Stuck with each other, hu?" Will says. Hannibal chuckles in his ear. The sound warms Will and brings a touch of peace to his anxiety. Will starts to calm down; Hannibal's support is a balm.

Will picks up several rings, turns them over, and watches the light hit them. He seems to prefer the platinum, which pleases Hannibal, though he hasn't tried to influence Will one way or another. Eventually, Will gets nervous again, but Hannibal knows it is because he has chosen.

"It's for you, so you can't upset me with your choice. Whatever you choose is the right one," Hannibal tells him softly, weaving an arm around Will's waist and pulling him closer.

Hannibal is pleased that Will's selection happens to be one of the three he had his eye on. It is an 8mm beveled platinum band with two large inset diamonds, one black and the other white, set side by side.
Will turns in Hannibal's arms and kisses him softly and with great affection.

Hannibal asked Mark about the sizing and the specifications of the diamonds. He confirms a delivery date and pays. Will clings to him the entire time. He is more comfortable touching Hannibal than his apprehension had convinced him to be. The saleswoman certainly hadn't known he was an owned omega, and the salespeople treated him like anyone else. But it is Hannibal who makes him feel seen as a person, as worthy of…well, anything.

"I love you," Will whispers into Hannibal's ear as he signs for the sale.

Hannibal turns, gazing into Will's eyes, "I love you, Will." He cups the nape of Will's neck, running fingers through his curls, his thumb rubbing the sensitive skin over his scent gland, where his bonding bite will go.
The salesman disappears in the periphery.

"Should we stop for lunch, or have you had enough for one day?" Hannibal asks, starting the car after removing the scalpel from the dashboard.

"Stay close, and I'll go anywhere with you." Will finds that it is becoming more and more true each moment with his Alpha.

Hannibal kisses the back of Will's hand before driving them to lunch.

When Hannibal parks, Will thinks he is joking. They are on an average street in Baltimore, and there is a convenience store on the opposite corner. The Bentley stands out like a sore thumb. Hannibal walks a disbelieving Will into a small mom-and-pop restaurant. It is empty as they walk in, except for the workers. One side has four wooden booths against the wall; the other side, which is a narrow walkway from the booths, has small tables with chairs. There are laminated placemats in place of the menu, and the background music is the radio playing in the kitchen.

They sit in one of the middle booths. Hannibal orders a crab cake entree, and Will orders the crab cake sandwich and chooses the homemade chips as his side.

"Hannibal, what's happening right now?" Will is freaking out.

Hannibal stands from his side of the booth and sits next to Will on his side, pressing against him.

"Better?" Hannibal asks. Will nods.

"I still don't know why you, of all people, brought me here."

"You'll see."

Their server, an elderly white beta man, brings over their waters and a basket of various rolls. Hannibal chooses a poppy seed roll and begins picking it apart, eating one bite and feeding the next to Will. When they finish that one, Hannibal picks up a wheat roll and does the same, one bite for Will, one bite for him, until the roll is finished. By the time they finish the second roll, the little old man brings over their plates.

"They smell great," Will admits.

“Indeed,” Hannibal confirms.

They eat quietly. Hannibal offers Will a forkful of the crab cake, which Will accepts and moans in approval. Hannibal accepts a bite of the sandwich Will ordered.

“This was really good,” Will says before eating his last chip. “How did you find this place?”

“The internet said it was Baltimore's best, undiscovered crab cake.” Will raises his eyebrows. It is certainly high praise.

Hannibal leaves the cash for their food and the tip on the table, waving to the waiter as they go.

“Will, I like good quality, whether it's food, clothes, or people. I don’t have to pay a thousand dollars for a meal to enjoy it. And I don’t need to have a mansion to take you home to. I need only you. If society shuns us, we’ll find a better society.”

“And great crab cakes.”

“And great crab cakes,” Hannibal seconds.

Chapter End Notes

That was a lot, but I hope you're happy about where we left things.

Crosses fingers, goes outside, turns around, and spits

Chapter 16

Chapter Summary

"Thank you."

"For what, Will?" Hannibal starts wrapping a curl of Will’s hair around his fingers, then uncurling and re-curling.

"For taking care of me."

"You should not thank me for that." Will looks at him curiously. "My motives are entirely selfish," he explains. "Making you smile, laugh, orgasm, they bring me immeasurable joy, and I fear I am addicted,” Hannibal's face is both severe and warm.

Chapter Notes

Teasing, fluff, and smutty smut - in that order.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The following day Hannibal wakes to a still-asleep Will, his little spoon, talking in his sleep. Hannibal listens in, always eager to see what Will has going on in his beautiful mind.

"Mm. No. Don't. Please. Please, don't. I . . . I don't. No. No!"

"Shhh, I'm here, Will, I'm here," Hannibal tells him, rubbing Will's arm and reassuring him that he is there and has him, over and over again, until he wakes.

"Han?" Will wakes up confused, and his heart is racing.

"Good morning, Will. I'm sorry to wake you, but you were having a bad dream."

Will hums an agreement and nods, then curls in on himself.

Hannibal curls behind him and kisses his neck once. He lay there with Will, supporting him and making no demands of him. Eventually, Will speaks.

"Thank you."

"For what, Will?" Hannibal starts wrapping a curl of Will’s hair around his fingers, then uncurling and re-curling.

"For taking care of me," Will says, attempting to straighten and turn to face Hannibal.

"You should not thank me for that." Will looks at him curiously. "My motives are entirely selfish," he explains.

"Making you smile, laugh, orgasm, they bring me immeasurable joy, and I fear I am addicted," Hannibal's face is both severe and warm.

"What's wrong?" Will asks.

Hannibal pulls Will closer and breathes him in, kissing his hair.

"I feel as if we are conjoined. And I am so far gone, I do not believe I would survive the separation."

"I'm not going anywhere," Will assures him.

"I...I know, not physically," Hannibal leaves it unsaid that Will was legally bound to him. "I mean emotionally. I know that you understand there's more I need to tell you. That there is more about me that I have not shared with you yet. But I believe that when you know…when you know all of me, you will pull away. That I will lose this Will."

Hannibal clings on, holding Will against him, unable to bear Will's scrutinizing gaze.
Will knows what Hannibal means by this Will. He likes being this Will and was frankly tired of that Will. That Will is a trauma response, and this Will feels genuine, born out of the love Hannibal offers him.

"This Will exists because you love me. As long as it's true that you love me, this Will will always come back to you; he doesn't exist without you. I don't exist without you."

Hannibal holds him closer. They lay like that until Will's bladder insists he get out of bed. Showering independently, they get around for their day reasonably quickly. Hannibal gives Will his injections without any undue drama.

For breakfast, Hannibal makes pancakes that he thinks smell almost as good as Will, and Will hand-whips cream to go on top. After breakfast, they each take a second cup of coffee to finish in the study. Hannibal sits on the corner end of the sofa while Will sits between his legs.

"What are today's plans?" Will asks, leaning to put his empty mug on the coffee table; Hannibal holds him by the hip so he doesn't tip forward off the sofa. Hannibal is quiet, and his concerns from the morning are still lingering.

"What is it?" Will asks when Hannibal goes too long without providing any answers. "If you need to go to the butcher's, I understand."

"Not quite; all my prep work is here," Hannibal supplies.

"You're not ready for me to see the basement," Will concludes.

"Mmhm," Hannibal nods. Will feels it against his hair.

"Okay," Will says, accepting, not wanting to push, and then he wiggles against Hannibal further. They are already pressed against each other, so all he does is rub himself against Hannibal's lap.

"Are you trying to distract me?" Hannibal says, nosing through Will's curls to nibble in his ear.

"Trying? No. But it's a pleasant side-effect." Will is always pleased whenever he can get a positive response from Hannibal.

Hannibal pulls aside Will's shirt collar and kisses and sucking where his neck at his scent gland, an absolutely intimate act and a promise to bond to the omega. The bruise left behind from the alpha's generous ministrations will be monumental based on his level of attention. Will is moaning, enjoying every sensation; the scent of his slick starts to permeate the air around them. Hannibal has one arm wrapped around Will's chest while the other slides down his abdomen to massage his bulging erection through his slacks.

"Oh, Alpha," Will whines with need. Hannibal bites him, and Will bucked his hips into Hannibal's hand. Will's moans get needier, and he tries thrusting into Hannibal's hand again, but Hannibal holds him back; his strong arm around Will's torso gives him the advantage.

"Don't be such a brat, baby," Hannibal tells Will, his hot breath on Will's wet neck makes the younger man shudder.

"Daddy," Will whines.

Hannibal stands, slipping from behind Will, who falls back onto the sofa. Before Will can form words to complain, Hannibal roughly pulls Will's pants and boxers off so that Will is bottomless on the sofa. Will pulls his flannel over his head, sparing himself the hassle of buttons.

"Shirt," Hannibal orders, holding his hand out for the item. Will complies. Hannibal lays the shirt down on the cream-colored sofa.

"Sit," Hannibal directs, pointing at the shirt. Will complies and sits. Hannibal pushes Will so that he is lying down on the sofa, his butt on the flannel shirt—Hannibal strips, staying out of reach, and when Will tries to touch him, he growls.

"You're being a naughty this morning, Will. I think I need to teach my omega a lesson."

"Daddy," Will whines, reaching out again.

"So impatient," Hannibal says while avoiding Will's reach. "No touching. Hands at your side."

"Yes, Daddy." Will complies; he grabs the flannel his butt is on, trying to avoid temptation. Wholly stripped, Hannibal lays on top of Will, every bit of him touching every bit of Will.

Will moans, ”Daddy.”

“First rule, not touching. Second rule,” he pauses, breathing against Will’s neck and ear. “No cumming until I say so.”

Will’s moan is a whine; he is already rock hard under Hannibal; it is pressed between their stomachs, leaking precum on them both.

“Oh, Will,” Hannibal’s tone is resigned. “Good boys don’t whine; good boys get to cum.”

“Han,” Will thrusts his hips up, looking for some relief. Hannibal bites him again, this time on the unmarked shoulder.

“Sorry, Daddy,” Will replies.

“Better. If you behave, after I’m done, I’ll let you cum. But you have to be a. Very. Good. Boy.” He waits for Will to whine or rut; he does not. “Learning already.”

Hannibal begins to kiss Will, slowly exploring every bit of his mouth. He presses his fingers against Will’s slick hole, not entering, just teasing with pressure and soft, delicate, circling touches. Hannibal is moaning in Will’s mouth, enjoying every sensation - Will’s wet mouth, his smooth skin beginning to sweat from his restraint, the soft, wanton circle of muscle, so moist and eager to part for him.

“Oh, Will, baby, your body was made for me, wasn’t it, omega? So perfect,” Hannibal praises. He moves his mouth lower and kisses down Will’s neck, putting more pressure on Will’s sphincter, already dripping with slick. Hannibal bites Will’s nipple as he slides his middle finger its full length into Will.

“Ah! Yes, Daddy,” Will calls out; the sudden intrusion and the feel of Hannibal’s teeth are electric.
Hannibal begins to suck on Will’s nipple, bobbing his head like he is on Will’s cock, thrusting his finger in and out in time with his head. Will’s breathy moans are getting shallower. Hannibal stops. He withdraws his hand and takes his mouth off Will’s nipple. He waits for Will to whine, but he doesn’t. Will’s breath is returning to normal.

“You’re doing so much better, baby,” Hannibal praises. Will looks at him with lust and adoration.

“Thank you, Daddy.”

Hannibal goes back to sucking Will’s nipple; Will is controlling his breathing. And then Hannibal bites Will’s other nipple and thrusts two fingers into Will.

“Fuck!” Will shouts.

“Shhh, shhhh, shhhh,” Hannibal soothes before returning to suck and lick Will’s nipple. Hannibal then gives up on Will’s nipple but puts his mouth to Will’s ear, continuing to thrust into Will with his fingers.

“So tight, my omega.

“Just for me. Your body…is only for me.

“And I am yours, Will.”

Will is crying from his words, from the pleasure. But he is staying still. Hannibal kisses his mouth softly. Will kisses him back, taking everything Hannibal can give him, like spring rain on the desert floor.

Hannibal pulls back from their kiss slowly, not a complete withdrawal, not punishment.

“I want to be inside you now, Will. Can I please?”

“Yes…yes, alpha.”

Hannibal uses his slick-coated hand to prep himself and presses against Will’s entrance. Will is still crying; his emotions are so raw, and his breaths are coming in fits and starts. Hannibal slowly presses into Will’s body, which is a tight vice around him. Hannibal won’t last long.

“You feel so good, Will. Do I feel good inside you, omega?”

“Yes, alpha.” Will clutches desperately at his shirt; he is overwhelmed with sensations.

“Soon, Will, I’m so close. Wait for me, we’ll go together,” Hannibal promises before he starts thrusting. Slowly at first, but Will’s moans are a siren’s song, calling Hannibal closer.

Hannibal kneels on the sofa, bringing Will’s hips up with him, never breaking his stride. From this position, Hannibal is able to thrust deeper and harder. From this angle, every stroke brushes Will’s prostate.

“Wrap your legs around me,” Hannibal instructs. Will struggles to coordinate his legs; his body is barely his own at this point. Hannibal holds onto one of his hips and begins to stroke Will’s cock, slick from the slow leak of precum.

“Come with me, baby. So close, my good boy.”

Hannibal cums, buried deep in Will, his knot stretching the omega, pressing against his prostate. Will cums over his stomach and Hannibal’s hand; Will chokes on the sobs triggered by his release.

“Such a good boy,” Hannibal confirms, gently positioning Will back on the sofa, with him on top and locked inside of Will.

“Daddy,” Will nuzzles Hannibal’s neck. “You’re so good to me.”

When Hannibal is finally soft enough to slip out of Will, they are both glad the flannel is there.

Chapter End Notes

Will's Daddy is the best

A Rough Monday

Chapter Summary

> “Can I help you?” Will asks a group of three besuited individuals, two men and one woman, all betas, all with short hair. Will would have thought their uniform haircut was funny if he wasn’t nervous - Hannibal hadn’t told him to expect anyone.
>
> “Is this Doctor Lecter’s home? We’re with the American Medical Association.” Man number one shows his identification.

Chapter Notes

> Starting with some smut and then getting some drama (what? There's some plot with this porn), but then a little more smut. It's a sandwich!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“When will my ring be delivered?” Will asks after spitting out his toothpaste. Hannibal is already up and dressed, and breakfast is being kept warm in the oven.

“Do you want to know, or do you want me to surprise you?"

Will looks slightly nervous.

“Let me rephrase. Do you want Daddy to surprise you, baby?”

Will’s anxiety melts, and his cock twitches. He nuzzles Hannibal.

“I do love your surprises, Daddy.”

“Such a good boy. Do you want a surprise this morning, mylimasis?”

“Mmmmm,” Will purrs. “Yes, please.”

“On the bed, face up, ass and feet on the edge of the bed.”

Will complies, his knees bent, presenting his beautiful pink, puckered hole.

“Are you sore from yesterday, baby?” Hannibal says, collecting a decorative pillow from the armchair in their room.

“It’s not too bad,” Will says, putting on a brave front, wanting more.

“It’s okay, I’ll be gentle,” Hannibal says, putting the pillow on the floor directly beneath Will —Hannibal’s promise to be gentle makes Will shiver.

Hannibal kneels on the pillow. Now, at the perfect height, Hannibal leans forward and passes a slow stroke over Will’s entrance with the flat of his tongue.

“Oh, fuck, Daddy,” Will cries softly.

And Hannibal is gentle. With slow strokes, he gently laps at Will’s beautiful pink skin. Slowly, he runs his tongue around the muscle, using the tip to press against the center. He is never harsh, never breaching. Slow, even pressure, he licks at Will. The omega’s moans dissolve into crying. And Hannibal takes care of his boy, wrapping long fingers around Will’s weeping cock, his firm grip giving steady strokes.

“Fuck,” Will moans.

Hannibal continues lapping at Will’s entrance, taking in the slick his omega is producing. The alpha increases the pressure of his tongue while his hand picks up its pace. Soon, Hannibal’s hand is slick with precum, and the spit and slick sliding down Will’s crack is soaking into the duvet.

Hannibal starts to suck and nibble at the sensitive skin while he continues to stroke Will. When Will’s hips begin to jerk erratically, Hannibal stands, bending and wrapping his mouth around Will, eagerly swallowing down his release.

Hannibal kisses Will, who is coming to his senses on the bed.

“Such a good boy,” Hannibal lauds.

Hannibal stands straight, returning to the pillow to the chair.

“You might want to wash your face before you talk to any of your clients,” Will suggests. Hannibal aims the most delicious smirk at Will, licks his lips, and then heads to the bathroom to wash his face.

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The doorbell rings when Will finishes the apple he has with his lunch. He leaves it at his place on the kitchen island when he goes to answer the door.

“Can I help you?” Will asks a group of three besuited individuals, two men and one woman, all betas, all with short hair. Will would have thought their uniform haircut was funny if he wasn’t nervous - Hannibal hadn’t told him to expect anyone.

“Is this Doctor Lecter’s home? We’re with the American Medical Association.” Man number one shows his identification.

“It is. He’s at his office, though,” Will explains.

“We know he’s being interviewed separately. We’re looking for Will, is that you?” asks man number two.

“Yes. What’s this in regards to?”

“We’ve been told he’s having inappropriate relations with a patient. Named Will,” the woman explains.

“I’m sure you understand the seriousness of that accusation,” adds man number one.

“I understand, however. I’m not a patient; I never have been. Dr. Lecter and I have had conversations. I can’t be a patient. I’m an unbonded omega, his specifically.”

Clearly, they aren’t expecting that, based on the variety of looks that bounce around the betas, from baffled to confused.

“I can get my identification if that would help,” Will offers, seeing that the three betas were at a loss.

“Uh, yes, please,” man number two manages to say.

“Excuse me for a moment. I’ll go get it,” Will says, closing the door and heading towards the mudroom. He goes to his coat on the hook, takes the key and phone from his pants pockets, and puts them in the coat. He takes his wallet out of his pocket, takes his Maryland state ID card, with its yellow and red pattern, out of it, and puts the wallet containing his credit card in the coat.

He returns in less than a minute, opening the door and showing them his ID. Man number two writes something on his clipboard, and the woman takes a picture with her phone. Man number one sees Will’s watch. It isn’t illegal for him to have a watch; it was just unusual for an owned omega to be given a watch that is so nice before being bonded. But Hannibal gives Will nicer everything; after all, he is wearing better clothes than the people at their doorstep, though Will would never say that (to their faces).

“Our mistake,” the woman finally says, returning his ID.

“Obviously, some confusion,” says man number two.

“When someone calls in a complaint like this, we need to take it seriously, you understand. Just in case,” man number one says, clearly trying to smooth things over.

“Just in case, sure,” Will echoes, making the man and his confidants feel better.

“Thanks,” the woman says as the three turn to leave.

It isn’t typical for people to thank owned omegas. People get an apology, a ‘sorry for the confusion, we hope we didn’t trouble you.’ But they didn’t have to care about owned omegas, so they don’t.

Will makes sure they are gone before he closes and locks the door. He runs back to the mudroom for his phone.

Han

I am glad we only had conversations

As am I.

Do you know who complained?

No.

But I have three guesses.

***

Will swarms Hannibal before he gets in the house, latching on in the garage. Hannibal carefully navigates them inside since Will is walking backward and decidedly occupied.

“I’m here, you’re here, we’re alright,” Hannibal says, trying to soothe the omega, while Will has removed Hannibal’s coat and suit jacket and is now unbuckling his belt. When he is successful, he asks Hannibal to sit. He sits at the bench for the harpsichord, as it is closest.

Will is vibrating with anxiety and need, but he sinks to his knees in front of Hannibal and pulls his dick out.

“Alpha,” Will moans before wrapping his mouth around him.

“Oh, Will,” he moans in reply, grabbing a handful of Will’s curls. “You know there’s nothing that can keep me from you.” He has to pause; Will’s exquisite tongue caresses the head of his cock, and he forgets every language he knows for a moment.

Will is bobbing up and down his shaft and applying gentle suction.

“God, Will!” Hannibal cums hard and quicker than he would have preferred. But looking at Will’s face, he sees that is entirely the point.

“Will that bench hold us both,” Will asked, eyeballing what appeared to be an antique.

“Yes, come here,” Hannibal says, swinging a leg over so he can straddle the bench. Will does the same, facing Hannibal so they can kiss. “You know I would find you if they took you. Kill them if they hurt you. And destroy their entire world if we were separated.”

Will puts his head on Hannibal’s shoulder, which then starts squirming under his cheek.

“What is going on?”

“I’m putting my penis away, it’s cold,” Hannibal says, putting himself to rights.

Will laughs out loud. And Hannibal chuckles with him. Making Will smile is the highlight of his life, even if it is at his own expense.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you're enjoying :)
*Whistles *Cecilia**

A Glass of Whiskey

Chapter Summary

> “They are nothing to me. You, Will, are what matters to me, nothing else.”
>
> “And you have no problems dealing in retribution?”
>
> “None,” Hannibal looks Will in the eyes. Will sees the truth: Hannibal doesn’t care about others—any of them.

Chapter Notes

> Little bit of drama, a dash of angst, and throw in some discussions of murder.

The next day, the alpha and omega spend their post-dinner evening making plans. They finish their tea, and Hannibal pours each a glass of whiskey. Will curls up on the sofa, pulling his legs up against his chest, and is lost in his own thoughts. Hannibal is replacing the stop on the decanter when he smells the acidic tang of Will’s anxiety.

“What is troubling you,” he asks, passing Will a crystal tumbler as he sits beside the omega.

Will grunts as an answer, accepting the tumbler but holding it with only one hand curled over the top, the heavy vessel hanging from his fingertips. Hannibal waits for Will to speak but shifts in his seat, pressing himself to Will’s side, sending his pheromones out to calm the omega or at least pull him from his thoughts. After another minute, Will takes a sip of the whiskey before leaning against the alpha. Hannibal shifts to put his arm around Will, pulling him against his side, enveloping him, protecting him. Will sighs and nuzzles against the alpha’s chest.

“I’m not good for you,” Will speaks softly, his voice partially muffled with his face against Hannibal’s vest.
Hannibal sighs and pulls the omega against him.

“Sutcliffe, Chilton, and Bloom,” Hannibal rattles off like he is reciting a grocery list. In a way, he is.

“And the neighbor,” Will adds.

“Ah, yes. Frank Holland. We cannot forget about him.” Hannibal runs a hand up and down Will’s side, the other cards through the omega’s soft curls. “But their inappropriate behavior does not mean you are bad for me, Will. All it has done is expose their rudeness.” He wraps a curl around his finger repeatedly, watching it spring away, only to re-curl it again.

“You don’t need this in your life.”

“The ‘this’ you speak of is nothing. They are nothing and will be dealt with shortly.”

“I don’t understand how you can be so calm through this.” Will stands, putting his drink on the coffee table; the crystal clinks against the glass top. He begins to walk the room, not quite pacing, more like stalking.

Hannibal stands and walks up to the anxious omega, stopping his pacing. “They are nothing to me. You, Will, are what matters to me, nothing else.”

“And you have no problems dealing in retribution?”

“None,” Hannibal looks Will in the eyes. Will sees the truth: Hannibal doesn’t care about others—any of them.

“Tell me,” Will says, wrapping his arms around his chest and bracing himself.

“Mmm,” the alpha says, acknowledging the request. He walks away, taking up Will’s previous role of stalking around the room despite stopping Will moments ago. Will walks to the harpsichord and sits on the bench, facing the room, the instrument to his left.

“I need to understand better, Hannibal. Help me understand this better. Help me understand you better.”

“Tell you, let you in, let you see behind the veil. To what end?”

“Han, I’m not going anywhere.”

“Ha,” his laugh holds no joy. “I told you before, I am drawn to you too close to let you go.”

“So, what are you worried about then?”

“That what you see will stop you; that you would refuse a bond. That you would remain stuck to me without your freedom because I will never let you go, Will.”

“Hannibal, I know what’s on our table each night for dinner. What is it you think I can’t handle?”
The alpha stalks around the room to avoid answering while Will waits. Then Hannibal quickly leaves the room without comment and without waiting for Will. The omega reacts, following Hannibal out of the room, not knowing where he is following.

Will is surprised when he hears Hannibal’s steps on the kitchen tile floor. Hannibal is gone when Will enters the room, but the pantry door is open. Will expects to find Hannibal but instead finds stairs—the basement entrance he never knew about. Will suspected Hannibal

hid his secrets below but hadn't expected this level of subterfuge, though he now chastises himself; Hannibal never does anything in half-measures; why would this be any different?

At the bottom of the stairs, Will takes in the space Hannibal has led him to—clean, orderly, and institutional. The cavernous space smells like cleanser. Shining instruments hang carefully, and the steel medical examination table in the center is well-lit. The room tells Will a story of determination and planning, control, and, most significantly, repetition. Hannibal is standing at the far end, close to the wall, though not touching it, keeping his suit from touching the rough face of the brick. His eyes are locked on Will.

"Tell me," Will says, his voice is calm and controlled.

Hannibal shakes his head. Evidence in front of them, and he still can't say it. Saying it, giving voice to it, to Will.

"I cannot."

Will walks towards Hannibal. The alpha tenses, and every muscle in his body stiffens as he innately shifts into a fight-or-flight response. Will sees this and stops where he is; instinctively, he scents the room, pushing calming pheromones into the space. For a bonded alpha-omega pair, the alpha would begin to calm immediately. For an unbonded pair, like Hannibal and Will, it might calm the alpha or anger him further. Will takes the chance and takes another step toward Hannibal; the alpha growls in response.

"What do they call you?"

Hannibal growls again.

"Ch…" Will starts, but Hannibal takes a large stride towards him. Just a few feet separate them.

"I won't lose you." Hannibal's quiet words are as much a threat as they are a promise.

"The Chesapeake Ripper."

Hannibal nods.

"And more," Will adds. Hannibal closes his eyes; his expressions are so minor that most wouldn't notice, but Will notices: the alpha winces slightly as if hurt.

Will takes the brief moment when Hannibal's eyes are closed to close the distance between them. When Hannibal opens his eyes, Will is in front of him.

"I love you, Hannibal." Hannibal sucks in a breath of air, the air sharp in his lungs.

"How," he demands of Will.

"You think these people care about me? Do you think my life would mean something to them? To them, I'm an object for sale. Why should I have sympathy for them? Why would you think that people who never gave a damn about me, or any other omega, would matter

more to me than you do? You. The only person who has treated me like a person, not just since I came here, but for years. Since you met me, I felt like a person. So, Hannibal, to answer your question, ‘how?’ Because I love you because you love me.”

Will reaches out to Hannibal; the alpha leans into his touch, and his whole body softens and relaxes. Will tilts his head to kiss him, but Hannibal pulls back slightly.

“Not here, not… not down here.”

Will nods his understanding.

They return to the study, nesting themselves on the couch, with Will in front, wrapped in Hannibal’s limbs. The pair of them are comforted by the closeness; it feels right. Hannibal’s face is buried in Will’s neck, taking deep lungfuls of the omega’s scent, calming him to the marrow of his bones, giving him the only peace he’s known for decades.

Will discovers Hannibal’s whiskey on the side table, which is barely touched. He takes a small sip before passing it to Hannibal. They each take sips, nursing the whiskey while Hannibal explains his plans for Mr. Holland.

Fishing and Sunbathing

Chapter Summary

> While not as common anymore, alpha-on-alpha violence is still common, and killing to protect your omega is justifiable. They don't even request Hannibal leave to make a statement elsewhere.
>
> ~*~
>
> We say goodbye to the neighbor, Frank. With a surprise at the end!

Chapter Notes

> It's murder time. It's not too graphic, but I want to warn folkx just in case.
>
> Will is also being dramatic and angsty again.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"I don't like you being bait," Hannibal comments again, making known his continued displeasure with the plan.

"I'm a good fisherman, Han." Will is confident in both himself and Hannibal, telling the alpha as much.

"I'd rather hunt." Hannibal is not sulking, despite what Will thinks he sees.

"Too messy, there's too many paths that cross. This is cleaner."

Hannibal nods reluctantly. It will be cleaner and, unfortunately, also messier, but only in the literal sense, not the legal one.

Hannibal is finishing getting dressed, brushing off his shoes, when he looks up at Will. He growls.

"I can change if you want me to," Will offers. Hannibal is clearly conflicted over Will's choice of clothing. Will is wearing the shorts he wore last week when sunbathing, as they had discussed—grey basketball shorts that go to mid thigh. Like last week, Will is forgoing his shirt. It's a sunny day again, and autumn has yet to take over, so his attire is entirely appropriate for laying in the sun. However, the alpha is having trouble reconciling that; he's been releasing a rumbling growl since he looked up.

“Han, please say something,” Will asks.

Will’s words connect; he sees the alpha unclench his muscles, stand straighter, and finally, stop growling.

“My apologies, mylimasis.”

“We’re still doing this?” Will is seeking clarification, before it’s too late.

“I am certain I will have no issues fixing our problem,” Hannibal responds calmly.

Will sees Hannibal to the door, and watches as the older man backs out of the garage and drives towards work. Will returns to the house, he has a few hours before heads out to sunbathe.

Hannibal

I’m going to sunbathe again, if that’s okay?

You may

Thank u

Will heads out on the back patio to once again lay in the late morning sun. He chooses the same chaise lounger and lays back. His gaze is hooded, if you were looking from over the fence you’d think his eyes were closed. Will is still and breathing slowly, the way he has learned to retreat into his own mind, while still being aware of his surroundings. To the outside world he was a half-naked, sleeping omega, laying out in the open for the world to see, to consume.

When Will hears the gate’s latch click, he calmly rolls off the chaise and onto his feet. Without rushing, he walks into the house through the french doors, not locking them behind him. He heads towards the kitchen. He can hear the door open and close behind him. It’s less than a minute before Frank Holland has grabbed Will by the scruff of his neck, effectively immobilizing the omega. Will slumps to the floor, and Holland is not prepared for it, losing his grip on Will. On the floor, Will rolls onto his back and kicks up, thrusting his heel up, he catches the neighbor on the jaw. The alpha quickly retaliates, looming over Will he kicks him in the ribs, knocking the wind out of him. Holland takes the opportunity to punch Will, connecting with his cheek, and Will’s vision is overcome with a sudden, bright, white light. Will lets out a desperate whimper.

“Shut up,” Holland directs.

“Fuck you,” Will counters.

“I know how to shut you up. Put that stupid omega mouth to work.”

And then Frank Holland is gone. The sound of him impacting the wall is thunderous. Hannibal’s tackle of the other alpha moved them both across the room, and their heavy bodies connecting with a solid wall is abrupt. With quick and efficient moves, Hannibal’s

fists knock out Holland, and with the viciousness of an alpha protecting his mate, Hannibal rips the throat out of the intruder. Will is in awe. It happened so quickly, all Will could do was turn and sit up. Holland was dead before he could ever get to his feet. But his gaze never wavered from his alpha, now bloody with his efforts, victorious.

Hannibal gathers Will into his arms and dials 911.

A paramedic is the first to respond in less then 5 minutes. The police arrive in less than ten minutes. Hannibal refuses to let any of them touch Will, who is shaking slightly and whose scent is becoming overwhelming. The police question Hannibal in the sitting room while a coroner's team removes the body.

While not as common anymore, alpha-on-alpha violence is still common, and killing to protect your omega is justifiable. They don't even request Hannibal leave to make a statement elsewhere.

After almost an hour, Will is still shaking and is pouring sweat. The pair of officers with them notice, particularly the alpha who can't take his eyes off of Will.

"I have to ask you to leave," Hannibal says calmly but definitively.

"We're just wrapping up," the beta officers agrees. The alpha is leaning towards them, towards Will.

"I have to insist. It appears the stress has put my omega into heat. You are going."

Were Hannibal a weaker man, he'd have either torn apart the alpha in front of him or mounted Will in front of two of Baltimore's finest. When the alpha takes a half-step towards them, Hannibal growls. It's enough for the beta to step into action, as he physically moves his partner from the house. They are left alone in the sitting room with only the bloodstain in the kitchen.

"Can you walk?"

Will whines in response, his instincts taking over his body, higher brain functions disappearing. Hannibal scoops Will up and carries him to the bedroom. Will starts to scramble on the bed, shoving blankets and moving pillows. He's making a quiet, steady whine of irritation and need. With a triggered heat, Will had no warning, no opportunity to nest; his instincts want him to build a nest for safety, while also wanting Hannibal with him, in him. The nest is crudely formed but it will do. When Will is finished, Hannibal is naked, waiting for Will. The omega needs to invite him, allowing the alpha in, to mate and bond.

But they haven't really discussed it yet. They haven't been expecting Will to go into heat so soon. Hannibal knows things are going well, but he doesn't know if Will is ready to commit to a bond. It is permanent, life-long, and both Hannibal and Will would have to be together, their bond, biology, would demand it.
Hannibal can get him through the heat without a bond. Avoiding a bite to the omega's scent gland is reasonable. He won't force this onto Will, he won't force Will into anything.

Will's whine and outstretched arms draws Hannibal from his reverie; his invitation to the nest.

With the physical grace of an apex predator, Hannibal maneuvers them onto the bed, his body between Will's legs, his chest pressing firm against the omega's. Will captures Hannibal's mouth in a kiss, aggressive, full of teeth and hunger. Hannibal positions himself and slides into Will's warmth. Will moans at the sensation, Hannibal's bottom lip between his teeth, omega canines pressed into soft flesh, but don't puncture. Hannibal's hips set a steady rhythm, and soon Will can't kiss and breathe, shifting his mouth to Hannibal's neck and jaw, where his teeth worry Hannibal's skin. Hannibal praises the omega, his omega, worshiping his body. Will's slick heat is overwhelming, the scent of his slick, heavy with the pheromones of heat, are ambrosial.

"Will," the alpha moans. His voice is heavy with his desire as he continues to thrust into the tight channel of his omega.

"Han," Will says on an exhale, his alpha's name as natural as breathing.

"Bite," Will soon asks.

Hannibal makes an anguished noise. The hormones of the omega's heat are consuming, building the desire to be bonded.

"Bite," Will says again; no longer a request.

"Will," he starts to explain.

And then Will's teeth are in his neck; omega canines are piercing the soft tissues of Hannibal's scent gland. The alpha's instincts are swift, the predator reacts, and Hannibal bites Will. The alpha's sharper canines tear into Will's scent gland.

The taste . . . the overwhelming taste of their mate as it floods their mouths, fills their senses, sends them both toppling over the precipice. Will comes between them as Hannibal's firm stroke in slams his knot into the omega, sealing their bond. Hannibal floods Will's body with his release, filling the omega, temporarily sating the need of his heat. Catching their breaths, they lap at their mate, cleaning the deep, bite wound and encouraging scar tissue, creating vivid reminders in flesh of their connection. A mutual ownership on display to the world.

Will stops, and tucks his head low, pulling his limbs closer to his body. He's trying to make himself smaller, to hide and disappear. Hannibal senses it immediately and his heart is breaking. He was afraid of this, of Will's regret at forming a lifetime bond to the Chesapeake Ripper.

"I'm sorry." It's a whisper.

"It won't change how I feel about you, Will. I promise to protect you, to love you, however you want me to. It won't change for me."

Will is shaking now; no, not shaking, crying, and his sobs are wracking his body, pressed tightly under the alpha, Hannibal feels every contraction and expansion of muscle.

“I’m sorry,” Will says again, crying between desperate gulps of air.

Hannibal is stroking Will’s hair, soothing the omega, nuzzling against his head, hoping that his scent will soothe Will, that the biology of a bonded alpha offering comfort to his mate can still help an omega desperate and regretful.

“You have nothing to be sorry for, mylimasis. I will not hurt you, ever. You can have whatever freedom you want; I will worship you however you will let me, however far you need me.”

Will grips Hannibal’s chest, blunt fingernails dig into the muscle of the alpha’s chest. Will is desperate to find stability, to find air.

“I’m..” Will starts. Takes a shuddering breath and tries again.

“I’m sorry I forced your hand. I want you so much, and compelled you. That’s why I’m sorry, Hannibal. I bit you first, coerced you into bonding with me.”

“Oh, Will,” Hannibal fights his own tears.

Will nuzzles Hannibal’s neck before exposing his own, the ultimate show of submission, his apology—his life, however the alpha will take it.

“Will, my love. You did not force me. I did not bite first because I did not want to force you. We had not discussed it and I would not take this from you, your autonomy.”

While bonds can be a beautiful gift between an alpha and omega, they are a permanent tether to the other, an instinctual leash that forces the pair together, and to submit to one another.

“I love you Will, and I am proud to be your bonded mate . . .” Hannibal hopes that Will feels the same.

“Oh,” Will gasps. The acidic tinge to his scent starts to wane and the sweet, overwhelming scent of his happiness soon appears.

“I love you, Hannibal. I … feel like an idiot. I mean, not about loving you.”

“About doubting me?” Hannibal offers. Will nods sheepishly.

“You are a gift, Will. One I hope someday to prove worthy of. But I will spend each day trying.”

Will pulls into a hungry kiss that is needy to share affection. Hannibal’s lips plundering Will, taking every kiss as a drop of water in the desert.

“Will you marry me?” Hannibal says between kisses, reluctant to part even for the question.

“I’m told,” kiss, “you’re supposed,” kiss, “to ask properly,” kiss, “with a ring.”

Hannibal laughs softly. “Yes, *mano širdis*, you are correct."

Will laughs warmly before resuming their kiss, lips soft, full, and enthusiastic. They take their time loving each other, the compulsion of Will’s heat slowly starting to build again, not overwhelming the omega or trying to overtake him, but encouraging and supporting their natural unification.

While a forced heat, such as Will’s, typically lasts a day, Hannibal and Will spend two in bed. Hannibal leaves the room only to get food and water and to refer clients that week.

Chapter End Notes

A surprise heat!? We made it, though, with only minor drama.

Drink some water, my fellow nerds and geeks.

mano širdis = my heart

Dinner and a Show

Chapter Summary

The maître d' of course knows who Hannibal is and immediately escorts them to their table. They walk past crowded tables, most turn to look at them, though some manage to do so more discretely than others. Hannibal lifts Will's hand from his arms to kiss his knuckles before replacing it on his arm. In those little moments, Will knows it's not just a show.

~*~

Hannibal takes Will out to a fancy dinner.

Chapter Notes

Please prepare the craft for descent - we're getting ready to land this bird.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will is sitting in their nest while Hannibal looks through their closet. Will has a nest of his own now, as a bonded omega, and is reluctant to go back to a traditional bed arrangement. Hannibal encourages him to keep the nest. They are a bonded pair and having a nest is instinctual to them both, for safety and shared proximity. In the few days since his heat, Will has added to the nest and is happier now with it's construction; Hannibal has been enthusiastic, buying Will the softest blankets and pillows, without concern for costs.

"It's Friday, let me take you out for dinner tonight, Will," Hannibal asks. "I have to go back to work next week. I would like to enjoy a free evening with the man I love."

The start of their week had been dramatic, even if you excluded the premeditated murder of their next-door neighbor. Will toured the Peabody Library with Mrs. Komeda; Hannibal bought them lunch. And now Hannibal is looking for the opportunity to bask in the joy of their new bond and forget the unsavory drama that preceded it.

"Mmm," Will purrs happily for his mate. "Okay, where are you taking me?"

"Charleston. Though I hope you will forgive me if I insist on dessert and drinks at home," Hannibal grins mischievously.

“You’re forgiven,” Will says happily which he punctuates by rising from their nest and walking to Hannibal, giving the older man a very promising kiss. “Will you dress me, Daddy?”

Hannibal nods slowly, eyes locked on the omega, before he grabs Will’s ass, a cheek in each hand, and lifts him off his feet until Will’s thighs are on his shoulder’s. Hannibal starts to mouth and nuzzle at the omega’s steadily growing erection. Will’s hands are threaded through the alpha’s hair, where he is gripping the man to hold on.

“Oh, Daddy!” Will pants. Hannibal is holding Will’s weight and the omega is holding on for dear life and enjoying the ride.

“When do we have to go?” Will asks a few moments later, having been thoroughly distracted.

“Soon,” Hannibal says with his lips wrapped around Will’s cloth-covered shaft

Will lets out a short whine, reluctant to part with Hannibal and his amazing mouth. With his strong arms, Hannibal is able to gracefully lower Will into their nest.

With Will lowered in the nest, Hannibal joins him, and strips the omega of his clothes. Encouraging Will to lay back, Hannibal hungrily goes down on the omega, his mouth claiming Will’s erection, while his fingers press into the omega’s slick heat. Will moans obscenely, calling for his alpha, for his daddy. Hannibal is relentless, with firm strokes of his tongue and gentle suction, he has to hold Will’s hip down, who is writhing with need beneath him. With three fingers paying delicate but focused attention on his prostate, Will cums in Hannibal’s mouth; the alpha happily swallows his release. With a soft kiss on the lips, Hannibal encourages Will from the bed. They will need to shower the scent of their arousal off before they go to dinner.

Hannibal slides Will’s trousers up his legs, sheathing him in a dark sapphire blue. He buttons and zips Will in, covering the black lace thong he put Will in. Despite all the mental gymnastics his brain is trying, Will is still half-hard while his Daddy dresses him. Hannibal’s not helping with his constant stream of pornographic praise and suckling kisses along his skin. The alpha had even paused, after dressing Will in his thong and socks, to bury his face in the omega’s crotch, taking deep lungfuls of the omega’s musky scent; Will whined with need, but his Daddy spanked him once on his bottom for being bratty before continuing on. With agonizing slowness and an indecent amount of touching and attention, Will is dressed, with a black v-neck jumper under a single breasted jacket to match his slacks. Hannibal turns Will so he can look in the mirror. The suit is amazing, and the color makes the red of his bonding scar stand out even more; Will understands why he’s in the sweater and not a dress shirt—no collar in the way.

“You want to go out to dinner to show off your bonded omega, don’t you?” Will asks.

“It’s not the only reason,” Hannibal admits, adjusting his collar. The alpha, uncharacteristically is not wearing a tie, showing his scar. Any alpha can try to force a bond

with an omega, but they won't be bonded. When the omega bites the alpha, the bond takes, they are both claimed permanently.

"Are you sure we need to go out, Daddy?" Will leans into Hannibal, pressing his still-half-hard erection against the other man.

Hannibal whispers against Will's ear, "Let me spoil you, baby." The warmth of his breath ghosting the omega's skin causes Will to shiver.

"Yes, Daddy," Will purrs.

Charleston is as intimidating as he thought it would be, yet when Will glances at the staff, the customers, he doesn't pick up the normal snobbery and disdain he's grown accustomed to. Arm-in-arm with his bonded alpha, people are courteous, even deferential. Will knows that Hannibal is influential, the way that the truly affluent are and that nouveau riche never will be, but to be subject to it is heady. To know that this alpha, Hannibal, is his, when he can be with whoever he wants, has Will on cloud nine.
The maître d' of course knows who Hannibal is and immediately escorts them to their table. They walk past crowded tables, most turn to look at them, though some manage to do so more discretely than others. Hannibal lifts Will's hand from his arms to kiss his knuckles before replacing it on his arm. In those little moments, Will knows it's not just a show. Parading them through the restaurant is good theater and keeps up appearances, but the brief kiss, the stolen glances, those are for Will, for them.

The maître d' pauses outside of a set of doors, ensuring that both men are ready. Will is slightly confused but quickly catching on. He looks at Hannibal and one looks confirms it: this wasn't last minute, Hannibal planned this.

The doors open to reveal the restaurant's wine library and at least three dozen people, all beautifully dressed and standing and applauding Hannibal and Will.

"Dear, what are they applauding?" Will whispers as they are ushered into the center of the room. Hannibal smirks and raises his hand slightly, his command of the room is so great such a small motion quiets the room down completely.

"When I first met you years ago, I knew you were special, Will. Over time I would learn what an understatement that was. I have told you I see us as two sides to the same coin, and I know that you have seen it too. Together our complimentary natures help one another, sharing our highs and lifting our lows. But this seems all to practical when I think about what you mean to me, Will. I have fallen irrevocably in love with you. And I'm a better alpha for it. I cannot conceive of a day where I don't want to be with you. You are my future Will, my family. I hope to have every day to show you how I feel; to care for you, to protect you, and yes, to spoil you. While our future is tied by nature with our bond, I ask that you share it with me as my partner, as my equal. Will, will you marry me?" Hannibal gracefully drops to one knee and presents the ring, shinning with the reflected light of the two diamonds, black and white, opposites and paired.

“Yes. Yes, Han, I will marry you.” Will’s throat is raw with emotion as tears threaten to fall from his eyes, but his smile is radiant. Hannibal hopes to capture the beauty of it on paper; he will remember that expression always.
Hannibal stands and pulls Will into his embrace. While they kiss, Mrs. Komeda proposes a toast to their happiness, and the room fills with applause, cheers, and good wishes.

As the party start and the mingling commences, Hannibal tries his best to stay glued to Will. When he’s not, MaryJo is at his side, intercepting folks and ensuring everyone is on their best behavior. Whenever Hannibal is able to return to Will he brings a plate of food, the alpha in him needing to care for his mate. Will is coping fairly well. The new sense of people’s acceptance for the bonded pair has carried into the room, for the most part, letting Will breathe slightly easier.

When Hannibal returns to Will with another plate of hors d’oeuvres and a glass of champagne, he finds Alana making her way towards his mate. He’s behind her, so she doesn’t see him, and her beta nose won’t be able to scent him.

“Good luck, Will,” she says dramatically in a tone that says ‘I know better.’ Will wants to laugh.

“The polite offering is typically ‘congratulations,’ Dr. Bloom,” MaryJo points out, ignoring Hannibal’s presence and playing along.

“They’re just so different,” she shifts from responding to Mrs. Komeda to talking down to the omega. “Will, you and he don’t make sense married. It made sense when bought you. You could be his toy while he finds a real partner, but to marry you, that’s wild.”

“You know what’s wild, Alana?” He pauses to make sure she’s paying attention. “Someone going to the APA over he and I. I mean, like you point out, I’m property; for now anyway, but someone called in a complaint against Hannibal. Wild.”

When Will looks her in the eyes he had no doubt: it was Alana. She probably picked up the phone herself and made the complaint. Happily. Whether Chilton and Sutcliffe are in on it is another matter. Will figures her next move will be telling.

“Still hungry?” Hannibal hands Will another glass of champagne, stepping in close to Will, and offers the canapés, holding the plate for his mate while he eats from it. Alana huffs and walks away.

“Glad you could make it, Alana,” Hannibal says amicably as she strides away.

Alana doesn’t make it 10 seconds before Sutcliffe and Chilton intercept.

“The three stooges,” MaryJo comments before she kisses Will on the cheek and goes to find her husband, who has been hiding at a table in the corner, where waitstaff are keeping him full up on gin and tonic.

“Lots to plan,” Will says smiling at his ring before looking up at Hannibal.

“Yes, indeed.” Hannibal knows they both mean planning more than the wedding.

Hannibal hand-feeds Will steak tartare on toast points, while Will’s kiss licks away the lemon juice from the oysters Hannibal eats. Hannibal introduces Will to colleagues from his time as a surgeon and currently in psychiatry; they are all polite and very respectful of boundaries. Many of them shoot disparaging looks at Drs. Chilton and Sutcliffe, which does wonders to reduce Will’s anxiety. Acquaintances from art galleries, charity galas, and the opera stop by, even the mayor makes an appearance. Each well-wisher explains where they know Hannibal from and always encouraging Will to join him next time, and tell him how happy they are to see Hannibal so ‘well matched.’ These types of comments leave Will flustered. He would think they are insincere and just being polite, but when he looks at them he sees that they’re truthful. After several of these comments, Will politely snags MaryJo as she walks past.

“You’ve been talking,” Will says conspiratorially and a smile on his face.

“I am happy to share good news and good matches,” she concedes.

“Thank you.” Will kisses her hand and lets her go; she and her husband head out of the room, making an end of their evening.

Many more guests trickle out, but not before stopping with good wishes and promises of invitations. Will lets Hannibal do all the talking while he clings adoringly to his alpha. Despite a few less-than-welcome guests, the evening was wonderful and both Hannibal and Will are ecstatic.

Hannibal starts the Bentley for their short trip around the harbor, and Will is curled up in the passenger seat, watching him with rapt attention.

“I can’t tell what’s hotter: you commanding a room like that or killing a man with your bare hands.”

“Well you have seen me socialize before and that did not put you into a heat, so I would say the latter.”

Will chuckles, “I suppose that’s true.”

Hannibal reaches for Will’s hands, still keeping his eyes on the road, and brings the omega’s hand to his lips.

“Take me home, Daddy.”

Hannibal purrs.

Chapter End Notes

Hannibal did it properly WITH a RING!

I fought with Hannibal's proposal. I'm still not 100% with it, so I hope you'll forgive me.
Let me know your thoughts.
I make up for it in a few chapters.

If it's close to bedtime, sleep now and binge 21-23 tomorrow.

Anxiety

Chapter Summary

Will is anxious. That in itself isn't entirely far-fetched, he's usually got least some minor, simmering level of anxiety happening at any given time, but he's more anxious than he has been lately. It started the morning after their engagement, when they woke up and Will avoided not just intimacy but any physical contact, and has been going for the last week and a half.

~*~

Something is on Will's mind, and he gets too anxious to discuss it.

Chapter Notes

Will's anxiety takes the wheel again, fair warning.

He learns that talking to a mental health professional works (!?)
-

But seriously, take care of yourselves. Drink your juice, dear.

"You can love me and still bite me anyway, Dr. Lecter."

Will is anxious. That in itself isn't entirely far-fetched, he's usually got least some minor, simmering level of anxiety happening at any given time, but he's more anxious than he has been lately. It started the morning after their engagement, when they woke up and Will avoided not just intimacy but any physical contact, and has been going for the last week and a half. Will barely stays in the same room as the alpha. The normally affectionate, cuddly omega seems to have gone. Hannibal tries on several occasions to get him to talk about it, with no success. Will says he's *fine*, and *just thinking*. Hannibal has even resorted to trying to calm the omega with pheromones, pushing his scent into the air to soothe his mate. It has some affect, Will's shoulders relax and the furrows between his eyebrows lessen slightly, that is until Will realizes what's happening and he gives Hannibal a frustrated look before leaving the room.

"Would it be better if I slept in another room?" Hannibal says that night after brushing his teeth. Hannibal is not just asking an opinion, but making the offer.

“What? No. Why are you asking?” Will’s nervousness comes out in his response.

“You are clearly upset about something and despite my efforts to help you with whatever it is, you continue to hold me at arm’s length. So I have to assume your issues are with me, and since I do not wish to continue causing you stress, I would rather you be at peace than continue to cause you harm by staying.”

Hannibal hurts saying this, it creates an empty ache in his chest and his stomach drops. The beast inside him is screeching at his suggestion, refusing to abandon his mate; the alpha wants to shield and protect the omega, not let him suffer alone. The man and psychiatrist, however, knows that forcing his proximity upon his fiancé will only cause more harm if he is the source of the issue.

Will reacts to Hannibal’s suggestion … poorly. Without saying anything, he turns, grabs a large, fluffy blanket from the nest and leaves the room, wrapping the blanket around his shoulders as he walks. Hannibal takes a breath before walking out after Will. The alpha struggling with his instincts to run after him and physically stop his escape. When he steps into the hallway, he sees the omega entering the guest bedroom, the one he had retreated to months ago. Hannibal is really starting to hate that room.

Will has the door closed, and Hannibal leaves it that way, knowing Will shut it for a reason, however much the beast inside him wants to rip the door off its hinges, grab the omega, and carry him back to their nest. (Whether or not there’s kicking and screaming is up to the omega’s discretion.)

“Please talk to me,” Hannibal says at the door.

Will whines, the instinctual noise of upset and uneasiness, is a punch to Hannibal’s gut. The alpha needs to protect his mate, to hold him close and fix what’s wrong.

“If you do not talk to me, I can only come to conclusions based on the evidence I have,” Hannibal declares; Will says nothing.

“Since the change in your behavior first began after our engagement, I am left to assume that you regret accepting my proposal, or regret our bond which preceded it.”

Will whines again, higher pitched, distressed. Hannibal’s beast is gnashing it’s teeth and clawing at its cage.

“No,” Will manages to cry out. “That’s…that isn’t the problem.”

“Will, I will do whatever I can to make you happy, legal or not, if it is within my power to do so. But I cannot take care of you if I do not know what is wrong.”

Hannibal hears Will moving towards the door and sees the light shifting under it. Will sits against the door. After a moment, Hannibal does the same, sitting side by side, with the door between them. Hannibal waits for Will to talk, he’s on his fourth inhale when he starts.

“You’re an alpha,” Will says.

Hannibal wasn't expecting to start with a biology lesson, so he doesn't say anything.

"I," Will starts, but is soon whining again. Hannibal's anxiety is climbing, to hear his mate in distress.

"Whatever it is, we will handle it together, Will," Hannibal promises.

"I don't want," Will has to stop again. Hannibal hears Will sniffling, wiping away tears. Hannibal's heart aches and his skin feels stretched thin, he needs to take care of his mate, to make it better and destroy whatever is upsetting him.

"If we have pups, I don't want you to sell our children, if we have any omega children. I can't," Will's cries have turned into a whimper and Hannibal is ready to break down a wall if Will won't open the door.

"Will, I would never. I could never," Hannibal's tone is adamant; his chest aches that Will would think that of him. "What makes you think I would do that? That I would ever do that, to a pup of ours?"

"You bought me!" Will shouts through the tears.

"To be with you. To free you!" Hannibal is panicking; his mate is upset, he's upset, and all his instincts want him to do is break down the door and wrap himself around the omega to protect him, to comfort him.
Will's crying is audible, desperate sobs that keep him from talking.

"From day one, Will, I told you I wanted you as a partner, as an equal. While I have misstepped, and learned from those missteps, I have worked everyday to show you that you are my partner and not my possession.

"I love you, Will, and I will love whatever family we are able to have. And I would never, could never, give up a pup of ours. Never." The last word is a growl, Hannibal's beast is near the surface, eager to destroy a world that would put the idea in his omega's head.

Hannibal hears movement and sees the light shifting under the door. Will gets out of the way of the door to open it. As soon as the door is open enough, Hannibal reaches in and pulls Will into the hallway, grabbing the omega and wrapping himself around him. Hannibal is on top of Will, burying his head amongst the blanket, finding Will's head and neck, scenting the omega, soothing his mate, desperate to hold and protect.
Will starts to move, to break his hands free of the blanket, the alpha lets out a warning growl. He has worked too hard to get the omega back in his arms to risk letting go of his mate so soon.

"Even the rich do it," Will whispers, though no longer trying to emerge from the blanket.

"I do not care."

"Hannibal, every-"

“I. Do. Not. Care.” Hannibal is growling again. “I will not build a family with you and break it up to turn a profit.”

Will is shaking his head somewhere inside the blanket.

“Will, do you doubt I love you?”

Will takes a breath before answering, “no.”

“If we are lucky enough to have pups, why on Earth would I willing part with a child who is part of you, part of us? The idea,” Hannibal laughs humorlessly. “The idea that I would part with a pup of ours is blasphemous. It is angering. I would destroy anyone who tried to separate our family, and then display them in effigy and serve them to you and our children to grow on.

“I do not care what other people do; I have never cared. And I certainly will not let it break apart the family I have worked so hard to start with you.”

Hannibal feels Will starting to shake, he is dejected that Will feels this way, that he could entertain the idea, that there was even a possibility.

Hannibal lifts the blanketed omega and carries him to their nest, where the alpha quickly and inelegantly strips to his underwear. He quickly makes his way through the blanket to press himself against Will (some people might describe it as wiggling, they would, however, be incorrect).

“I’m sorry,” Will says when the warmth of Hannibal’s breath finds the nape of his neck.

“For what, mylimasis?”

“Doubting you.”

Hannibal sighs. “You have had a lifetime of conditioning and a queue of alphas who have reinforced those ideas. I cannot blame you, I will not. But I will spend each day proving that I am not like those pigs.”

“It would be a lot of people to feed me and our future pups, Hannibal.”

“We will just have to have a lot of pups,” Hannibal pledges.

Will purrs and wiggles himself closer to his alpha. Hannibal pulls the omega closer to him, the blanket creating a cocoon of safety around them as they snuggle into their nest. Hannibal begins to purr, too.

He’s on all fours while his fiancé is behind him, tongue thrusting into the warm puckering muscle. Hannibal moans when Will starts to stroke his straining erection in time with the thrusts of his tongue. He can smell the omega’s arousal, hot and wet without even being touched.

“Will,” he moans. He’s close.

Will wraps his other hand around Hannibal's knot while he continues his plundering, stroking and thrusting in tandem and picking up speed.

"Oh, Will!" Hannibal's orgasm is sudden, wrenched from him by the talented mouth and hands of his partner.
Will licks one last, broad stroke over the alpha's hole before he lies behind his mate in the nest, avoiding the wet spot.

"I have to go to work," Hannibal says, his tone is despondent. He wants to take care of Will and there isn't time. He growls.

Will strokes Hannibal's arm; the alpha, still on all fours, still tense from his orgasm combined with his desire to tend to his mate, has him immobilized; his brain can't decide on a course of action.

"I will be okay." Will tells him. "You can do something for me though."

Hannibal grunts as a question while finally moving, heading towards the shower.

"Arrange for car service, I need to go to the mall."

Hannibal starts the water to bring it up to temperature.

"I can take you this weekend," Hannibal offers.

"I'd rather go today. It's harder to shop for your Christmas present when you're there."

Hannibal smiles. "I appreciate that. Though you know I do not expect or need any gift from you."

"I know," Will says, smiling, before kissing Hannibal and pulling them into the shower.

Hannibal manages to stay focused enough to make it to his first appointment on time. Hannibal, however, loses his focus throughout the day, trying to decide on what he can get Will for Christmas. Everything he thinks of doesn't seem like its enough compared to what Will gives him by being his mate. He thinks about reaching out to alphas he knows that are bonded to omegas, to see what types of gifts they've given in the past. But when he thinks of the alpha's he knows, none of them have married their mate, none of them have treated them as an equal. So he forgoes that line of thought entirely. What do you buy for the mate who has given you a happiness you never knew, a love which you thought impossible, and a future you never dreamed of? For the first time in decades, Hannibal is worried he doesn't have enough money.

Thursday afternoon rolls around and Will arrives for his appointment. Their last conversation was one-sided because Will was anxious. Now their roles are reversed and Hannibal is anxious. Will smells it as soon as he walks in the office—the burnt, acrid odor corrupting the warm butter and toasted almonds.

"What's wrong?" Will asks as soon as the door is closed.

“Nothing.”

“I tried that one, too. You didn’t fall for it and neither am I.”

“I am struggling with something and my emotions, thoughts, and instincts are all fighting to offer solutions.”

“Can I help?” Will offers sincerely.

“This is your hour, Will.”

“Okay, here’s my issue Dr. Lecter: my bonded mate and fiancé is struggling with something and I want to help him. What do I do?” he asks innocently.

“If I did not love you so much I would bite you right now.”

“You can love me and still bite me anyway, Dr. Lecter.”

Hannibal growls and pulls Will towards him; the omega instinctively wraps his arms around his mate and tilts his head, exposing his neck in submission. Hannibal spreads his jaw and put the sensitive flesh of Will’s neck between his teeth, he moved his mouth, so his sharp alpha canines drug along the soft skin of the omega. He paused over Will’s bonding scar, placing his teeth over the tissue, an echo of the original bite. He licks a soft, slow swipe against the sensitive skin of his mate before tucking the omega under his chin and burying his face in Will’s soft curls.

“Tell me?” Will asks, his cheek resting on the alpha’s shoulder, his face against Hannibal’s neck, breathing in the warm, nutty scent of his mate.

“I cannot think of something to get you for Christmas. My emotions tell me that anything I get needs to be grand and illustrious, like my love for you. My thoughts, my intellect, says that your needs are met and that any gift is sufficient.”

“And your instincts?”

“Yes, well those tell me I should breed you, and mount you over and over until your round with my seed and my pups.”

Will squirms and Hannibal can smell the omegas slick that’s leaked between his cheeks.

“While your instincts seem to like that idea, outside of your heat, those efforts would be metaphorically fruitless.” Hannibal rubs his nose through Will’s hair.

Will encourages Hannibal to sit and Will climbs in his lap, and his head returns to the alpha’s neck. Will peppers his neck with soft kisses, earning a hum of approval. Hannibal’s scent already smells less anxious, less acrid.

“I did have a thought. About what you could give me,” Will proposes.

“Are you comfortable with it not being a surprise?” Hannibal is reluctant to take the suggestion.

“That’s the best part, there’s still a lot of room for surprises,” Will’s eager attitude intrigued the alpha.

“Pray tell, what are you thinking?”

“There are a few loose pigs. The Chesapeake Ripper could harvest a sounder. Your surprise can be the rest of the details: the effigy, the menu,” the omega recommends.

Hannibal shifts position so that Will can feel under his ass the alpha’s growing bulge. Will takes in a sharp breath and gasps before grinding down on Hannibal.

They go over their scheduled hour since Hannibal insists on being extremely thorough when eating out Will’s ass. By the time Hannibal is finished with Will, the omega’s scent has saturated the large office. While it is too late to start cooking the meal Hannibal had originally planned, and Will wants to order pizza again, they compromise, and Hannibal makes them pizzas. Will is reluctant to admit, and inflate the alpha’s already oversized ego, but Hannibal’s right, he does make a better crust than the pizza place.

It's the Holiday Season

Chapter Summary

It’s 10:30 when the breaking news alert interrupts the parade Will put on for background noise. Hannibal picks up his tablet to see what Tattlecrime has on the story to compare.

Breaking News this morning. The FBI and Baltimore City Police are investigating what appears to be another murder by the notorious serial killer, The Chesapeake Ripper.

Chapter Notes

It's time for loved ones!
It's time for presents!
It's time for murder!

A bit of smut, then lots of murders. There is some discussion of the bodies and the acts of murder; however, there is more discussion of art. They talk to Jack, too.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

On Christmas Eve, Will breaks down and admits that he does not have wrapping paper for Hannibal’s gift. The alpha shows Will to the mudroom, where a closet contains a ridiculously well-organized wrapping paper caddy. Will waits until Hannibal leaves to wrap the gift.

Dr. Alana Bloom is an easy mark. When Hannibal shows up on the beta’s doorstep with a bouquet of roses, she readily welcomes him into her home. He gags her while he works, her bathroom repurposed for his workspace. He won’t display her in the home, but that doesn’t mean he’s going to be sloppy either. She survives removal of her leg muscles, remaining conscious for the cuts. When Hannibal starts to collect organs, she finally succumbs to her fate.

Despite getting to bed late, Hannibal wakes up at seven on Christmas day, to Will’s lips wrapped around his cock and his hands stroking him. Before he can finish, he pulls Will off, sets the omega on his hands and knees, and enters Will from behind. Will moans loudly as his alpha pounds into him, hips jarring with each thrust of hips.

“I am going to breed you.”

“Fuck. Yes!” Will is trying to keep it together while the alpha is breaking him apart.

“Full of me.” Hannibal is losing his words, full sentences are beyond him

“Alpha!”

“Carry my pups,” he promises—insists.

“Yes, Daddy!” Will cums, he release streaking the bed beneath him. He can feel the Alpha’s knot butting against his opening on each thrust. Hannibal is close.

With a final, sharp thrust, Hannibal slams into Will, forcing his knot into the omega. Will keens as Hannibal spills into him, each gush painting his inner walls.

“Merry Christmas, mylimasis,” Hannibal says panting, catching his breath.

“Merry Christmas,” Will says, wiggling his hips, sending a jolt of pleasure through the alpha, who gasps at the sensation.

Hannibal is making breakfast while Will sets up the sitting room. The TV is on the local news, WMAR, waiting for news about his present. There are mugs of hot coffee ready and Will has put a candy cane in his. Hannibal’s present, wrapped finally, is on the coffee table next to his mug (sans candy cane).

Hannibal joins him carrying their plates with Kūčios, eggs, and a piece of Alana ham steak. Bacon needs time to cure, and her many other cuts would go towards the wedding reception. The second of January would be their wedding day, what Hannibal describes as a small ceremony, before Will’s heat, and while they couldn’t wait to be married, there is a sounder to finish with.

It’s 10:30 when the breaking news alert interrupts the parade Will put on for background noise. Hannibal picks up his tablet to see what Tattlecrime has on the story to compare.

Breaking News this morning. The FBI and Baltimore City Police are investigating what appears to be another murder by the notorious serial killer, The Chesapeake Ripper. The crime scene was discovered this morning by commuters near the city’s Penn train station. The body of a woman was found at the base of the “Male/Female” statue on the southwestern side of the station. Investigators are withholding the woman’s identity from the public until all appropriate notifications are made. News of this murder was first reported by Tattlecrime.com reporter, Freddie Lounds . . .

“She did get a good picture,” Hannibal admits, passing the tablet to Will. “Merry Christmas, dear.” Will accepts the tablet and kisses Hannibal. Curled against the alpha’s side, Will scrolls through the article, returning to the pictures repeatedly.

“I love you. I wish I could have seen it in person,” Will declares, kissing Hannibal again.

Alana’s body is mostly nude, on her back, her right arm reaches up and across her, grabbing the base of the statue, the male side. It’s Cabanel’s “The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Paradise,” Eve’s selfishness causing her to be cast out. The picture isn’t taken

from close enough, and the quality isn't high enough, but Will is confident that Hannibal procured real fig leaves to cover Dr. Blooms pubic area. Hannibal has at least one book on 19th century art and selecting one from the study, shows Will the painting he's referencing. Hannibal removed the organs through a posterior incision, along the back; more complicated to harvest, but it made for a much cleaner presentation—anything for his omega.

Will leans over to get Hannibal's gift from the coffee table, placing it in his fiancé's hands. "Your turn."

The large, flat box is sized for a shirt, but whatever is in it weighs more than a shirt or sweater. It is wrapped in a red paper with gold foil, the pattern looks brocade but is boughs of a juniper tree. There is a gold fabric ribbon around the box tied with a simple bow. Hannibal kisses Will, a brief but affectionate peck to the lips, before he unwraps. The doctor unties the ribbon with care, and wraps it around his hand before putting the wound scrap into his pocket, unsure if he's moved by nostalgia or something else. Sliding his finger on the end, he captures the end and pulls through, tearing the paper, exposing a plain brown cardboard box. He slides the box out from the torn end of the paper; and slides the lid from the box, where there is stiff white tissue paper, and nestled within the folds, is a leather bound book.

The book is a fawn brown leather. Burnt into the cover, in on the bottom right corner in a simple serif font is "Dr. & Mr. Lecter." Opening the cover, Hannibal sees it is a sketchbook, one that is well-bound with quality paper that's 11x14 inches. On the first page is a sketch, it's of the back of a hand, Will's left, starting just past the wrist and extends to include the proximal phalanges. This includes his ring, the focal point. Done with hard drawing pencils, the light strokes show the metal catching the light of the beveled platinum, and a small sparkle to the pair of diamonds, one dark, one light.

"Hands are hard," Will explains. "I didn't think I could do the fingers right." He's nervous, making excuses.

"It is beautiful."

"It's really not," Will counters, suddenly feeling like he's missed the mark and not done enough. Hannibal committed a felony felony for him, Will ordered a notebook and did one mediocre drawing.

Hannibal turns to look at Will. Will sees his eyes are wet, filled with unshed tears. The alpha's smile is more than the quirk of his lips, it's the corner of his eyes, it shines through his eyes from deep within, and Will knows that Hannibal loves it. Not just because he loves Will, but the gift, too, the gesture.

"It is the start of us, Will. I could not love it more, just as I cannot love you more."

Hannibal gently moves the sketchbook and box aside before pulling Will into his lap. Hannibal traces Will's face with his fingertips and combs his hand through the omega's wavy curls.

"But I will try, my omega, every day."

It's around two in the morning on December 28th, when Hannibal wakes up Will. Hannibal learns that whoever had the idea that omegas were more docile and less aggressive that alphas had clearly never tried to wake one in the middle of the night. After successfully defending himself, with no permanent injuries, the alpha is able to draw Will out of bed and towards the basement.

Will freezes at the sight of Frederick Chilton bound to the metal surgical table. Hannibal watches Will closely as the shock transforms to a dark glee.

"Where's Sutcliffe?" Will asks Hannibal but keeps his eyes on Chilton.

"I imagine he'll be discovered shortly. But I couldn't display Dr. Sutcliffe and not take Dr. Chilton. Fight or flight are strong instincts."

"He's certainly not the fighting type," Will confirms.

Hannibal stands back, next to his workbench; Will walks closer to inspect. Laid out are a variety of tools, mostly medical, a few are tools for around the house and office, some for landscaping. One Will doesn't recognize. It's metal and shaped like a 'T,' the long branch is grooved.

"A hole reamer," Hannibal explains when he notices the tool catching Will's attention. A dark smile claims Will's face.

Working as a pair, Will learns some very useful knife skills and butchering techniques. Hannibal is an exceptional instructor, and works to prolong the experience, preserving the meat. Chilton is alive for two more days while they harvest and carve him. Will explains to Hannibal what he suffered at the doctors' hands; when he hears of the abuse, Hannibal is upset he hadn't make Sutcliffe longer.

"Come by early then. We'll share a toast and get you back to Bella well before midnight . . . Perfect. We will see you tomorrow."

"Agent Crawford is joining us for dinner tomorrow," Hannibal tells Will.

Will has just come from the shower—his hair is damp and his cheeks are pink from the hot water.

"He wants your insights on The Chesapeake Ripper?" Will is almost laughing as he says this.

"He's welcomed yours as well." Hannibal pulls Will into a kiss, before he licks a drop of water from the omega's neck.

"Then I'm glad we took care of our house guest this morning," concludes Will.

“Many European traditions celebrate ringing in the new year with eating pork,” Hannibal elaborates, setting plates in front of Jack and Will before sitting down to his own.

“It smells delicious. And thank you again for letting me intrude,” says Jack.

“Not a problem. I just hope we’re able to help. Would you care to catch us up to speed?” Hannibal replies.

“The news only has so many details, I’m sure,” adds Will.

“Yes, of course. Though I’ll save photographs until after we eat,” Jack nods at the manila folder at the far end of the dining table.

“Thank you,” Hannibal says, nodding his approval of the decision. “I have to ask, Agent Crawford-“

“Jack, please.”

“Jack, thank you. I have to ask, should I be worried? Both the victims are doctors that have some connection to Johns Hopkins.” Hannibal asks, his tone an expression are filled with concern.

“I’m not eager to become a widower, we haven’t even had our ceremony,” Will adds with concern and a touch of fear, because an omega would be scared. Will reaches out and slips his hand into Hannibal’s.

“I don’t think there’s any need to be concerned, but I hope, a closer look will help determine that for certain.”

Will thinks that Jack has no clue what he’s promising. Without an accurate profile, he can’t say who The Ripper will target, and it’s reckless to promise otherwise.

Jack describes the first of the sounder, Alana. There’s nothing surprising with Jack’s details. Will got a more detailed understanding from Hannibal. As Hannibal expected, Jack doesn’t mention the Cabanel.

“From the news, the body was displayed artistically. I imagine someone is looking into any potential symbolism?” Hannibal prompts.

“We’ve got someone looking, but there’s a lot of art out there,” Jack admits.

“It looked like those images of Adam and Eve, where they cover themselves with fig leaves,” Will offers innocently. The omega hasn’t been in school since he was a child, vagueness and a mask of innocence work well in combination.

“Maybe,” Jack admits, finishing the last of his champagne. “May I?” Jack asks Hannibal, gesturing towards the folder of photos.

“Yes, let me clear these,” Hannibal takes their empty dessert plates (ricotta cannoli) and champagne flutes to the kitchen while Jack gets his folder.

“Are you comfortable seeing these,” Jack asks Will. Returning from the kitchen, Hannibal is happy to see the agent asks Will directly, rather than defaulting to his alpha.

“I think so,” Will says sheepishly. Hannibal opts to sit again so he can watch Will’s reactions. Will’s mask is good, there’s no doubt. But Hannibal knows Will better than anyone, and he can see the gleeful joy that lights him from the inside when the omega looks at Sutcliffe's body.

“For Dr. Sutcliffe, we knew the imagery right away; it’s the myth of Sisyphus,” Jack introduces.
Will looks at the photograph. Freddie Lounds didn’t do it justice.

“He was found in Gunpowder Falls State Park. He’s pushing the boulder,” Jack offers.

“Sisyphus angered the god Zeus for daring to touch his lover. Zeus punished him by sending him to Hades, where he spends eternity pushing the boulder up the hill, only to do it over and over again,” Hannibal elaborates.

There are pictures from Sutcliffe of every angle. Face on, or from the boulder’s perspective, Donald Sutcliffe looks normal. From the sides, the flesh shreds away. From behind, Sutcliffe is bones. The rear angle makes it look like a skeleton in a flesh diorama.

“The Ripper didn’t like this guy,” Jack says bluntly.

“I think it’s more complicated,” Will offers. Jack nods for him to continue. “The Ripper thinks he’s beneath him. This isn’t a man killing another man. He depicted a god killing a man.”

“You think The Ripper is delusional?” Jack asks skeptically.

“No,” Will shakes his head. “He knows he’s a man, but he doesn’t think his victims are. If The Ripper is a man, his victims are swine. He elevates them with art, pulling them from the slop and transforming them into something worthy.”

“So you think he wanted to elevate these two?” Jack is trying to follow along.

“I think,” Hannibal explains, “The Ripper is going to elevate the pigs into art. But he certainly thought these two weren’t worthy. If Will’s suspicions are correct, Eve’s selfishness had her cast out of Eden, and Sisyphus dared challenge the gods and defile his lover.”

“Too big for their britches,” Will suggests.

“He didn’t like their egos,” Jack summarizes.

“More than egos. He found them distasteful,” Will adds.

“Rude,” says Jack.

Hannibal nods. They talk a bit longer, helping Jack to iron out a profile that is both more and less accurate.

“If you think of anything else,” Jack says, standing to leave.

“Can we keep these?” Will asks, pointing at the folder of glossy pictures.

“Just don’t let them get out,” Jack asks.

“I wouldn’t,” Will promises sincerely. He doesn’t want to share his Christmas gifts.

It’s shortly after midnight, the start of the new year, when breaking news interrupts Andy and Anderson’s New Year’s broadcast. Hannibal grins when he’s become national news. It’s one thing to be The Chesapeake Ripper getting coverage around the Chesapeake Bay, but national news is different. They’re both proud of Hannibal in that moment. A blonde woman reporter named Jessica sits at the news desk to break the story.

Breaking News here at CNN. The FBI has recently discovered another alleged victim of the serial killer known as The Chesapeake Ripper.

This victim is the third victim in a week. The first victim, found Christmas morning, was Dr. Alana Bloom, a psychiatrist in the Baltimore area. The second, found December 28th, was a Dr. Donald Sutcliffe, a neurologist in Baltimore. These two victims mark the first time there is any connection between victims.
Prior reporting cites an anonymous source within the FBI, where the Bureau considers there to be quote, ‘too many connections between the victims.’ Professions, social circles, and geography create an abundance of connections for the FBI to investigate, bogging down an investigation into a killer who has been at large for years.

Previous killings by the murderer occurred with victims in groups of three before going into hiding for months and years. Investigators hope that this will be the victim who has the evidence to identify this prolific serial killer.

For more on this story, we now go live to the local affiliate . . .

Freddie has better pictures this time. She should, she was anonymously given an invitation to the exclusive event. The American Visionary Art Museum was a little closer to home than Hannibal typically preferred to work in, but he couldn’t resist. The museum hosted a New Year’s Eve cocktail reception for a fundraiser. Hannibal had arranged for her as press coverage without getting his name involved. The handwritten note accompanying Freddie’s ticket informed her the view of the fireworks would be ‘to die for.’ Located at the Inner Harbor, the museum was center stage for the fireworks, which set a beautiful backdrop for Dr. Chilton’s contribution to the museum’s collection. Meticulously crafted fishing lines held each and every piece of the doctor, so his corpse looked like a fireworks explosion. The fishing line was attached to threaded metal screw eyes. Each metal eye was reamed and threaded through the doctor’s bone. Many were inserted while the doctor was alive.

Doctor Chilton is a part of the Baltimore culture now and will be talked about for years; Will gets to see Chilton suffer in agony; Hannibal gets to make Will happy—all three get what they want in the end.

Chapter End Notes

A sounder is the traditional gift for a couple's first Christmas, isn't it?

The New Year

Chapter Summary

> “Don’t you growl at me, Hannibal Lecter. You’ll have him back tomorrow when he’s your husband and not before.” Mrs. Komeda has no fear. Will thinks it’s unhealthy but chuckles anyway.
>
> ~*~
>
> Hannibal and Will get married.

Chapter Notes

> Our boys are getting married ❤️❤️ And they have a wedding night.
>
> Last chapter. I enjoyed writing this, and I hope you enjoyed it too!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

MaryJo was not upset when Will told her the wedding would not be in the spring—she was thrilled to discover that The Peabody Library did have an opening on their preferred date. (The poor couple, the alpha died in his sleep, and the distraught omega swears someone came in and killed him. The omega is thankfully getting mental health treatment.)

On New Year’s Day, MaryJo comes to collect Will, who is spending the night before the wedding with her. The omega can prepare separately to surprise Hannibal at the ceremony. Hannibal isn’t thrilled about some other alpha taking away his omega, never mind she is: one—mated and married to someone else, and two—an old friend.

“Don’t you growl at me, Hannibal Lecter. You’ll have him back tomorrow when he’s your husband and not before.” Mrs. Komeda has no fear. Will thinks it’s unhealthy but chuckles anyway.

“I love you, Hannibal” Will reassures, grabbing his overnight and garment bags before kissing his alpha.

“I love you, too, Will.” Hannibal nuzzles against Will’s nose, and the omega purrs his approval.

“Will, that champagne won’t drink itself,” MaryJo yells over her shoulder as she is making her way to her vehicle. Her driver is at the car waiting, holding open the door to her Rolls

Royce.

Will winks at Hannibal before he follows Mrs. Komeda out the door. Hannibal clutches Will's ring like a life preserver.

Hannibal spends the night finishing food preparations. For hors d'oeuvres, there are sausages, bacon-wrapped stuffed dates, and melon and prosciutto. There are filets ready to sear, roasts prepared for the oven, and dried and cured meats ready to slice. Fresh produce and alcohol are procured by the caterers, who are willing to work with Hannibal's menu and cuts. (Honestly, he did half the work, and they still charged him full price, so they were wise to avoid complaining. It would have been rude.)

It's just before midnight when Hannibal realizes he's checked the roasts and steaks for the fourth time. He reluctantly admits to himself he's done enough as goes to bed. At first, climbing into the nest alone, Hannibal struggles to find sleep. But after enough tossing and turning, Hannibal finds himself on Will's side, and wrapped around one of Will's pillows, basking in the scent of his mate, Hannibal drifts off to sleep.

"You really are a good pair," MaryJo says, topping off their glasses with the last of the second bottle of champagne.

"Mmm," Will says, he means 'yes' and 'thank you' but he can't quite find the words.

"You doubt me?" she replies with a chuckle, likes she's merely entertaining the idea that there's a distant chance she's wrong.

"No you. Just . . ." Will waves his hand to indicate the world in general. "I doubt everyone else will see it that way."

"Will, have you met any married omegas?" she asks, her tone is now sincere again.

"No."

"I'm lucky enough to. They've been together for over twenty years now."

Will smiles at the idea.

"You didn't choose the circumstances you were born into, Will. And frankly, neither did Hannibal. But you were lucky enough to find each other.

"An alpha-omega bond is a rare and beautiful thing. You'll find a lot of people who are jealous. But you've got a wonderful protector in that alpha of yours, I have zero worries he'll take care of you. Your heart and your instincts brought you this far, Will; don't let your head talk you out of anything."

"I won't," Will promises with a smile. "Thank you for this. For everything."

"My pleasure," Mrs. Komeda replies before tipping back her glass.

Hannibal might be sweating. There's a first time for everything, and breaking out into a nervous sweat for the first time might be happening while he's standing at the altar. Hannibal is standing by the officiant, the mayor, who looks good, coordinating his navy suit with his wife, who's seated in the back row and eager to enjoy the lunch that awaits them. Hannibal retreats into his mind palace to avoid fidgeting.

Being two solitary people, Hannibal and Will have no wedding party with them—no groomsmen to flank them. Since Will is an owned omega, there is no one to walk him down the aisle; regardless, Hannibal and Will both felt the symbolism of him walking down the aisle on his own was poignant. It's just the two of them, making a promise to one another.

Hannibal is actively not fidgeting at this point, his mind palace for once insufficient to distract him from his surroundings. Hannibal chooses to adjust his lapels and gently tugs his jacket into place, letting the impressive work of his tailor do its job. The clean lines of his black tuxedo speak for themselves. Head-to-toe black, including a vest, Hannibal makes him look as dashing as he does formidable. The jacket accents his broad shoulders and trim waist. The one touch of color is the fringed, pure white flowers of his boutonnière—white Sweet Williams.

The gathering is what Hannibal describes as small, fifty guests. Including plus-one's, Hannibal had to be strategic in who they extended invitations to. But the venue was perfect, the grandeur of the large space made beautiful by the softness of the books and lights. The tall space of the central atrium was surrounded by the tall, cream columns and balconies of the five stories rise above them. Strands of lights are festooned across the atrium, adding brightness to the natural light from the glass ceiling high above the guests.

There are murmurs at the back of the church, and then the music shifts into a new piece, Air on the G String. Hannibal, and everyone in attendance shift their attention to the start of the aisle. The aisle is covered in a satin runner, a red so dark it looks black. The fabric slightly muffles the omega groom's footsteps. Will's dark curls are a halo on top of his tuxedo; as the other side of Hannibal's coin the omega is wearing a three-piece all-white outfit. His boutonnière is a small bouquet of yellow blossoms, rue, Lithuania's flower, and traditional for brides to wear on their wedding day. Will steps slowly towards his mate, the warm tones of Bach and the soft lights around them make the whole experience feel unreal, like a storybook moment. But then Will catches Hannibal's gaze, and the secret smile, that is only for Will, is shining from his eyes and Will is happy to discover it's very much happening.

The mayor's welcoming words are brief, surprising from most politicians, but he knows they aren't here for him; they're here for the couple. And, of course, said couple wrote their own vows. Traditionally, the alpha goes first; in this instance, Will is happy to comply with tradition.

"Will, my omega, from the moment we started on this path, I vowed to marry you if I was lucky enough to earn that privilege. The fates have been kind, and luck was on my side. I am under no delusion thinking that having you here with me was given. Society would tell us that an omega would be lucky to be chosen. But I know differently. I know that nature, not society, requires the omega to pick the alpha. I know it is not luck but love and hard work for

an alpha to overcome prejudices and win over their omega. And I know that you are the only one who sees and understands me the way I see and understand you.

“I do not believe just any alpha can bond with an omega. Plato tells us that the ancient Greeks believed humans were once beings with four arms, four legs, and two faces. The gods, fearing their power, split them in two, condemning them to spend their lives searching for their other half, their soulmates—the alpha and the omega.

“My omega, my other half, my Will: I promise to love and honor you; I vow to protect and care for you; I will cherish and nurture the life and family we will build together until my dying breath.”

Hannibal’s eyes are glassy, tears fill his vision, and a true smile is on his lips.

“Hannibal, my alpha. The Chinese have the concept of yin-yang. More than opposites attract, in its simple symbolism, it demonstrates that black and white, darkness and light create a whole, but within that, there is some light in the darkness and some darkness in the light. Being with you has shown me that. I have never known myself as well as when I’m with you.

“My path to you was not easy, but each step with you was. Living a life where I am told by everyone and the world around me that I am less than a person was not easy, but building myself and becoming whole, thanks to you, was easy. It was not easy living without control, but yielding to you was easy. It was not easy for either of us to trust others, but it was easy to trust each other. Life without you before you, Hannibal, was not easy, but falling in love with you was.

“Hannibal Lecter, my alpha: I promise to honor and cherish you, to keep and protect you. I promise to keep choosing you and our future together. I love you, Hannibal, and I promise I always will.”

Hannibal let a tear run down his face; even his superior self-control was unable to stop it. Will was crying happy tears, the occasional giggle escaping him.

Hannibal eagerly returned Will’s ring to his finger while Will slid its match onto Hannibal’s hand.

“I now pronounce you alpha and omega; you may kiss each other.”

The applause fills the hollow space, and more Bach accompanies them to the dining space.

Will is worried that they have too much food, but when the wine starts flowing and people start dancing, the reception that starts as lunch continues past dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Komeda anticipate it, paving the way with the event staff for their longer stay.

It is dark outside when Hannibal has enough and throws Will over his shoulder for a dramatic exit to the applause and laughter of their guests. They are spending the evening back in their nest before heading off for their honeymoon tomorrow. The pair are traveling across Europe’s

Mediterranean border; Hannibal is eager to take Will somewhere warm and sunny and show him countries and cultures almost as beautiful as the Omega; they spend Will's heat in Florence.

"Alpha," Will whispers in Hannibal's ear. Hannibal is planted on Will's neck, worrying the soft skin with his teeth, no doubt leaving the omega with a beautiful love bite on the side of his neck opposite his bonding scar. Hannibal finally relents, giving up, temporarily, on his favorite chew toy.

"Mr. Lecter," Hannibal purrs before kissing his mate.

Will reaches between them, holding onto Hannibal's thick shaft and guiding him in. Will is wet and ready, and the nest beneath him starts to soak with the omega's slick. Hannibal is in no rush and slowly presses into his husband. Will is keening, and his moans are needy as he begs the alpha for more, harder, and faster. Hannibal supports his weight on one arm while his other hand strokes Will reverently from head to hip, pausing to clasp Will's side and rub his thumb over the jutting bone of Will's hip. Hannibal's thrusts are strong and steady, driving Will closer to completion with every slide of his alpha cock.

"Daddy, please. I need you. I need your knot!" Will is begging. Hannibal has him so close, but his thrusts are deliberate, his pace shifting and preventing Will from finding his release. Hannibal is happy to comply when Will begs so nicely, so prettily. The alpha increases his pace, inching them both closer to the edge.

"You're so good for me, baby. So good, Will." Hannibal's whispers turn into a moan as his knot starts to press against Will's rim.

Will is crying, "Daddy, daddy, daddy, daddy." He can feel Hannibal's knot start to catch, teasing him.

Hannibal thrusts forcefully, his knot pushed past the tight ring of Will's muscle. Will gasps, and his muscles clench around the thick intrusion. Will's orgasm is intense, his body is overcome, his hot channel is clenching the alpha's cock rhythmically; Will's arms and legs shake, intense feelings and emotions make his coordination unreliable. Hannibal rocks into the tight heat of the omega as his orgasm starts. Hot, thick cum fills the omega, his release feels like it takes hours, as Will's body continues to milk Hannibal's knot, the omega's body drawing more and more from the alpha.

Knotted together, panting against their husband's neck, they find a moment of bliss, of pure contentment. In each other's arms, between kisses, through words and emotions, they share their hearts.

Chapter End Notes

Comments and Kudos are welcome!

Stay hydrated and caffeinated, fellow nerds!

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